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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

JANUARY, 1925

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The Problem of the Personality

IN a study of the Dramas of the Mysteries, it was said that, when the aspirant catches a glimpse of his possible divinity, when the universal message of the glorious future that may be his, awakens his heart, he does not find himself free, unshackled, a light-hearted spirit ready to speed forth toward the Light; on the contrary, with the vision of the goal, he becomes aware of the impediments, the tremendous drag of the personal self which he has built up, and of the kindred impulses in mankind all about him.

Perhaps we may come closer to the problem of the personality by using a simpler term, suggested in one of Mr. Judge's *Letters*, where he says that the personal question is the most difficult one, and adds: "I mean the purely personal, that relating to 'me.'"

Facing exactly the same problem, Pascal says: "The 'me' is detestable. I detest it because it is unjust and makes itself the centre of everything. The 'me' has two qualities: it is unjust, because it makes itself the centre of everything; it is hostile to others, because it desires to enslave them. For every 'me' is the enemy of all others, and wishes to be their tyrant."

Add this sentence, attributed to the great Shankara: "There is no cause of thy bondage to birth and death except the domination of the 'me.'"

We may gain a good deal of insight into the "me" by considering it as a dynamic mind-image moulded of plastic, etheric substance, and in that sense an elemental; the central elemental, about which the elementals of the lower nature cluster.

These elementals of the mind, like other forms of growth on the lower planes, have two dominant characteristics: assimilation of outside material, and expansion. Consider a plot of ground, cleaned and prepared for sowing, in which a few seeds of the burdock are dropped. They germinate, grow, and in due time bear seed; in no long time the whole area is covered with a thicket of burdock.

If there be a ton of these weeds, this will mean that the expansive energy in the first few seeds has gathered a ton of material from the air, the water and the earth, and has assimilated it to the nature of these tyrannous weeds with their clinging burs. The energy in the weeds is expansive; it tends to spread in every direction where it can find a footing. Unchecked, it would in time cover the earth.

The "me" has exactly the same characteristics: it tends to assimilate all available material, and to expand indefinitely. Given a free field, it will fill the world. Or, as Pascal says, it is unjust because it makes itself the centre of everything, and seeks to become the tyrant over all others.

As the burdock draws material from earth, water and air, and assimilates it to its own nature, so the "me" reaches out after material to assimilate, from above, from without, from all sides. Possessions, houses, lands, kingdoms may be sought solely to aggrandize and enhance the "me." Like the jackdaw in the fable, it loves to appropriate the peacock's more decorative plumes. It is the primeval soap-box orator. It delights in praise and sternly rejects all blame.

At this point, those of us who are desirous of self-knowledge may test its influence on ourselves. Do we love praise and hate blame? So far as we do, the "me" is still strong within us.

Looking at the matter reasonably, it is clear that we can learn little from praise, but much from blame. If our motive in a certain task has been that the purpose of the Masters should be accomplished, if we be praised, this may reassure us, but will not greatly increase our self-knowledge, or aid us in the performance of our next task. But if, instead of praise, we receive wise and discerning criticism, this at once reveals ways in which the task in hand might be better done, and therefore shows us how we may accomplish the next task more effectively. A really disinterested motive will, therefore, prefer criticism to praise, because criticism can at once be turned to practical uses. But the motives of the "me" are not disinterested; they never go beyond itself and its own aggrandizement. So it praises itself and enjoys praise from others, always trying to ward off blame and criticism.

Therefore, *The Voice of the Silence* says: "Shun praise, O devotee. Praise leads to self-delusion. Thy body is not self, thy Self is in itself without a body, and either praise or blame affects it not."

Because the "me" is nothing more than a self-centred, self-absorbed mind-image, it is inherently and inevitably weak. In comparison with the great universe, the "me" is small to the vanishing point, and all the forces which spring from it are weak. Conscious of this weakness, it is perpetually on the defensive.

Though weak, the "me" is a continual source of danger to our spiritual life. We may suppose that, if they had to face the Masters alone, the Dark Powers would be swiftly swept into annihilation. But the Dark Powers are hard to assail because they strike their roots into mankind, so that they could not be annihilated without annihilating mankind. It is the parable of the wheat and

the tares. The "me" is the part of us in which the Dark Powers strike root, feeding and fattening the "me" in us in all possible ways by whispered flatteries and suggestions of evil.

Because the "me" is self-centred, it isolates itself from the well-springs of life that flow to us from the Logos through the Masters and their disciples. Isolated from great Life, it is of necessity weak. Conscious of weakness, it seeks to bolster itself up with self-praise and the supposed good opinion of others, and is keenly sensitive to anything like dispraise, reproach or censure. Censure arouses resentment, which may reverberate in the "me" for years, with ever renewed special pleadings of self-justification, as balm for the hurt of criticism, to reassure and fortify the sensitive weakness that has been shaken and assailed, self-praise being supplemented by continued mental attacks against the censor. This is what Saint Augustine has called "the lust of self-vindication."

Yet this prolific source of evil and danger has no genuine reality. The personal "me" is the result of a mirage, through the mistaken attribution of selfhood to what is not really Self at all. Let us see whether we can bring to bear certain practical considerations, that will undermine its hold upon our thought.

Begin with the simple matter of "name and form," which is a common Oriental expression for personal existence. Without deeply considering the matter, each of us tends to think of his present name and form as real and permanent, as genuine parts of the personal "me." Yet a very little consideration will convince us that name and form are neither inherent nor permanent.

In the case of each one of us, the personal form has been changing continually through the successive stages of bodily growth; it will continue to change until it is finally effaced. Yet at every stage we have mentally identified ourselves with the form of that stage, and, with a persistence that is truly marvellous, have generally been able to derive some satisfaction from the process.

So with our personal names: so far as any deliberate choice of ours goes, they are purely accidental. They did not exist for us before the present birth; they will not adhere to us after death.

As before, we can use these things, as we used praise and blame, to measure the degree to which we are subject to the illusion of the "me." Do we think of these forms and names as being genuinely ourselves, cherishing the vanity of portraits, or of seeing our names in print? If these two vestures suddenly disappeared, how much sense of identity should we retain?

Yet we well know, as soon as we take the trouble to think about it, that both name and form are transitory, and in that sense unreal. Before the present birth, neither existed for us, nor will they have any reality after death. They will find the same complete oblivion as have the names and forms of countless former births: "unnumbered tens of millions of births," as Shankara puts it. What has become of the names and forms we then so confidingly wore, completely identifying ourselves with them? And why should the present incumbent have any better luck?

And in general, when seeking to unravel the tangles and wrappings of the

"me," we shall find it no bad practice to look forward quite definitely to death, to the death of the present personality, with the realization that all that is real within us has passed through innumerable deaths, each dissipating a personality that, for the span of a life-time, had been all-important to us. And to-day we have not the faintest remembrance of names that once meant everything for us.

Wise meditation on death, which fills a large place in many methods of practical mysticism, in both East and West, is an effective weapon against the tyranny of the "me."

Sleep, the sister of death, may also teach us a valuable lesson. Much has been said, beginning with the great Upanishads, regarding spiritual truths to be learned "on the other side of sleep," and the experiences that may be registered on the mind at the moment of waking, as we return from the realm "at the back of the heavens."

The chief barrier in the way of bringing through this spiritual knowledge is the personal "me," with the fretfulness and restless preoccupations which start into sudden activity at the moment of waking, and drive the better consciousness back again across the threshold.

We can all observe this sudden return of the personal mind to its activity each morning. There is a corresponding stage every evening, just before going to sleep, from which we may learn something regarding the personal "me." In the few moments before sinking to sleep, if we observe attentively, we can watch the personality temporarily going to pieces. First we notice that our thoughts are no longer connected or logical; we are not yet dreaming, but they are disjointed and grotesque as in dreams; we are thinking palpable nonsense so far as the personal mind goes; the mind is running without control, like a clock without a pendulum or balance wheel. Then the sense of the personal "me" begins to fall to pieces; we can watch it break up and dissolve, so that, for a moment, we are conscious of being, but also conscious of not being that "me." It has melted away for the time, like a coloured cloud blown to shreds by the wind.

This commonplace experience, so habitual that we hardly notice it, may help us to understand two things: first, what is likely to happen to the cherished personality at the moment of death; second, what may happen now, if we will only see through the glamour and mirage of the personal "me," and drop from our shoulders its intolerable burden.

Here, perhaps, a word of caution may be necessary. The "me" is an illusion, but it is something more than an illusion of our thinking only. We must beware of thinking that we have rid ourselves of the false personality when we have merely analyzed it in the mind. It is a problem not for the mind only, but also for the heart and will, though the mind must do its indispensable part in its solution.

Perhaps we may make this clearer by coming back to *Light on the Path*. We are bidden to seek in the heart and to uproot the giant weed; but this injunction comes only after the commands to kill out ambition, the desire of life, the

desire of comfort. These things are the life-currents of the "me," and, so long as they are flowing through it and sustaining it, mere mental analysis will not accomplish much, though it may indicate the starting-point for accomplishment. Ambition, the desire of life, the desire of comfort, which are the outlying strongholds of the "me," must be first attacked; only then will it be possible to make war against the central citadel. It is useless to persuade ourselves that we have uprooted the giant weed, if we have done this only by mental analysis, while the self-indulgent will continues to rule. Genuine and continued sacrifice is the indispensable condition of victory.

But, it may be asked, if we see through and dethrone the personal "me," with its fleeting name and form, its mirage of unreal self-hood, what shall we find in its place?

The most practical answer, perhaps, we shall find in *Light on the Path:* "Hunger for such possessions as can be held by the pure soul, that you may accumulate wealth for that united spirit of life which is your only true self." On the one hand is the personal "me," which is a mirage, the man imagined in the post; on the other, the true self, the united spirit of life, the spirit which is in the Masters of the Lodge, the spirit which they express, in which they live and move and have their being. The "me" is the bar which keeps the door of life closed until we are willing to lift the bar and open the door.

When the "me" is seen through, for the mirage that it is, when it is then set aside in every act, by wringing out the last drop of self-indulgence, when the united spirit of life is recognized as the only true self, then all effort is directed to the service of that holy spirit which Masters strive to evoke and kindle in all human hearts and souls.

Let us consider how we may give ourselves to their purpose, and strengthen it in our hearts. Two powers will help us. First, the spontaneous divine energy of the united spirit of life, ever seeking to express itself in devoted work and service, as inevitably as the trees put forth green leaves in spring; second, our ceaseless effort to obey and strengthen this innate tendency, guided by the wisdom that Masters and their disciples so generously put within our reach.

How are we to strengthen this spirit of life in our hearts? First, perhaps, by realizing and loving what this divine spirit is accomplishing all around us. The Theosophical Movement is full of its work; by studying that and seeking to work with it, we can enkindle and increase love in our own hearts. But its work is everywhere through the world; the beauty of a flower should speak to us immediately of the beauty of that inner spirit, from which all visible beauty flows; an act of sacrifice, a mother's care of her child, is the manifestation of that spirit. So we should look for it and love it; and, since our minds are the pliable things they are, we should take advantage of this, and of set purpose mould them in this direction, affirming and impressing on them what we can learn from the Masters and the holy records concerning the spirit of life, so that our minds, so prone to saturate themselves with mirages, may instead be infused with divine wisdom.

But in the last analysis the surest of all ways to arouse real and enduring

love for that spirit, is to sacrifice for it, to render service that costs. The love which Masters bear for us, the love they infuse into all work for that spirit, was engendered and nourished by sacrifice. It must be so with us also, if we would follow in their steps.

To come back to the question: If we see through and dethrone the personal "me," with its fleeting name and form, its mirage of unreal self-hood, what shall we find in its place?

We can find a constructive answer, by one who has made the journey, in the letters of a living Aryan Master, not long ago most indiscreetly given to the public, but from which we may, perhaps, discreetly quote. The central event belongs to the last three months of the year 1881.

We may lead up to that event, by quoting first from a letter written in the spring of that year: "It is from the depths of an unknown valley, amid the steep crags and glaciers of Terich-mir—a vale never trodden by European foot since the day its parent mount was itself breathed out from within our Mother Earth's bosom—that your friend sends you these lines. For it is there he intends passing his 'summer vacations.' A letter from the abodes of eternal snow and purity. . . . The world—meaning that of individual existences—is full of those latent meanings and deep purposes which underlie all the phenomena of the Universe, and Occult Sciences—reason elevated to supersensuous wisdom—can alone furnish the key wherewith to unlock them to the intellect. Believe me, there comes a moment in the life of an adept, when the hardships he has passed through are a thousandfold rewarded. In order to acquire further knowledge, he has no more to go through a minute and slow process of investigation and comparison of various objects, but is accorded an instantaneous, implicit insight into every first truth . . . the adept sees and feels and lives in the very essence of all fundamental truths—the Universal Spiritual Essence of Nature. . . . I have laboured for more than a quarter of a century night and day to keep my place within the ranks of that invisible but ever busy army which labours and prepares for a task which can bring no reward but the consciousness that we are doing our duty to humanity. . . ."

Then, in the autumn of the same year: "We are at the end of September. . . . My chiefs desire me particularly to be present at our New Year's Festivals, February next, and in order to be prepared for it I have to avail myself of the three intervening months. I will, therefore, bid you now good-bye my good friend, thanking you warmly for all you have done and tried to do for me. . . . And now I must close. I have but a few hours before me, to prepare for my long, very long journey. . . ."

The intervening months may be bridged by two quotations from the letters of another Master, to the same correspondent: "Two days later, when his 'retreat' was decided upon, in parting he asked me: 'Will you watch over my work, will you see it falls not into ruins?' I promised. What is there I would not have promised him at that hour! At a certain spot not to be mentioned to outsiders, there is a chasm spanned by a frail bridge of woven grasses and with a raging torrent beneath. The bravest member of your Alpine Club would

scarcely dare to venture the passage, for it hangs like a spider's web and seems to be rotten and impassable, yet it is not; and he who dares the trial and succeeds—as he will if it is right that he should be permitted—comes into a gorge of surpassing beauty of scenery—to one of our places and to some of our people, of which and whom there is no note or minute among European geographers. At a stone's throw from the old Lamasery stands the old tower, within whose bosom have gestated generations of Bodhisatwas. It is there, where now rests your lifeless friend—my brother, the light of my soul, to whom I made a faithful promise to watch during his absence over his work. . . ." And again, about the same time: "Not having the right to follow K. H. I feel very lonely without my boy. . . ."

Then in January, 1882, a high disciple writes: "The Master has awaked and bids me write. To his great regret for certain reasons He will not be able until a fixed period has passed to expose Himself to the thought currents in-flowing so strongly from beyond the Himavat. I am, therefore, commanded to be the hand to indite His message. I am to tell you that He is 'quite as friendly to you as heretofore and well satisfied both with your good intentions and even their execution so far as it lay in your power. You have proved your affection and sincerity by your zeal. The impulse you have personally given to the Cause we love, will not be checked. . . . In unselfishly and at personal risk labouring for your neighbour, you have most effectively worked for yourself. The man of 1880 would scarcely recognize the man of 1881 were they confronted. Compare them, then, good friend and Brother, that you may fully realize what time has done, or rather what you have done with time. To do this, meditate—alone with the magic mirror of memory to gaze into. Then shall you not only see the lights and shadows of the Past, but the possible brightness of the Future, as well. Thus, in time, will you come to see the Ego of aforetime in its naked reality. And thus also you shall hear from me direct at the earliest practical opportunity, for we are not ungrateful and even Nirvana cannot obliterate good.'"

Early in February, the same Master who wrote concerning the "retreat" and his own loneliness, transmits this message: "The task *is* difficult and K. H. in remembrance of old times, when he loved to quote poetry, asks me to close my letter with the following to your address:

> "'Does the road wind uphill all the way?'
> 'Yes to the very end.'
> 'Will the day's journey take the whole long day?'
> 'From morn to night, my friend.'"

Then, toward the end of February, the Master himself writes: "My Brother —I have been on a long journey after supreme knowledge, I took a long time to rest. Then, upon coming back, I had to give all my time to duty, and all my thoughts to the Great Problem. It is all over now: the New Year's festivities are at an end and I am 'Self' once more. But what is *Self?* Only a passing guest, whose concerns are all like a mirage of the great desert. . . ."

FRAGMENTS

THERE are many who seek discipleship, but there are very few who attain it; for most of those who are seeking, seek themselves; they are not seeking Me. So long as the object of a man's search be himself, so long shall he wander in darkness, and miss every turning of the Way.

Lose no opportunity, therefore, to deny thyself, from the least even to the greatest, since self is the shadow on thy path, the arch-deluder, the only barrier to accomplishment. Crush it beneath an iron will, that it may serve as stone to make thy road.

If thine eyes be filled with seeing, how canst thou see? And if thine ears be filled with hearing, how canst thou hear? And if thy heart be filled with feeling and thy mind with thinking, how canst thou feel and think?

Thou art a creature of two worlds. If thou be fully occupied with the world about thee, what canst thou perceive or know of the world beyond the horizon of thy consciousness? If thy vessel be filled to the brim, it cannot contain one drop more, even of the finest nectar.

* * * * * *

Having left self-seeking, take one further step: do not seek my gifts, seek Me. Disciples are not venial servants looking for their fee, no matter how spiritual the coin.

He who would find Me must endure both heat and cold, indifferent,—so great the fire burning in his heart.

He who would find Me must be possessed by the ardour of his search, using all things else, as indeed they should be used, merely as instruments for that one end.

CAVÉ.

PYTHAGORAS

I

Practise discernment in all thy acts; let reason be thy guide. So, having laid aside the mortal self, thou shalt become a God, whom death cannot destroy.

GOLDEN VERSES OF THE PYTHAGOREANS.

ACCORDING to tradition, Pythagoras was one of the Messengers sent by the Lodge "in the last quarter of every century to enlighten a small portion of the Western nations in occult lore."[1] He seems to have sounded the keynote of the Theosophical Movement for the whole cycle of the modern West. The Greeks, among whom he worked, belonged to our era and to our race, and the terms in which Pythagoras addressed them, differ little from those in which the Lodge addresses us, the inheritors of Greece, to-day.

The Greeks absorbed the older Mediterranean and Oriental civilizations, but they also revealed qualities which appeared dimly, or not at all, in the archaic nations. They consummated one cycle and inaugurated another. To get a clearer view of what such a change signified, one should, in particular, study the work of the great occultist, whose life marks the dawn of modern history. It is natural that the Masters, the guardians of human destiny, should have made a special effort to reach men at that time, to prepare channels for the new forces and to guard against pollution and over-pressure at any point. Pythagoras, as their agent, must have been entrusted with a two-fold mission,—to manifest, in thought and action, the unique quality of the new cycle which was beginning, and, at the same time, to preserve the experience harvested during the old cycle which was closing, for without the discipline of this experience, it would be impossible to control the exuberance of the creative forces, or to make them intelligible and effective. It is not marvellous that the figure of Pythagoras, though misunderstood and even travestied by historians, should tower above the centuries.

When we consider the nature of the subject, the incompleteness and the confusion of the historical record is easy to understand. Modern methods of scholarly research, however excellent, too often uncover only the superficial strata of events. The life of an occultist is poor provender for the average scholar, especially when, as in the present instance, the sources do not conform to the accepted standard of what sources ought to be. It is a fact that almost all of our information about Pythagoras comes from writers of the Decadence, seven or eight centuries after his death. The statements are fragmentary, often contradictory, with no authority save that of earlier documents which

[1] *Theosophical Glossary*, p. 198 (art. Mesmer).

have been lost. Generally, they reveal little except the personalities of the authors. Even if the words signify historical facts, these are deflected by the consciousness of a time which tended to degrade Pythagoras into a mere wonder-worker, and his doctrine into superstition.[2]

But the student of Theosophy has no prejudice against using *The Secret Doctrine* for the purpose of comparing the ideas there set forth, with the debris of thought still discernible in the Pythagorean sources. It is fair to say that, without the help of *The Secret Doctrine*, there is no way of bringing order into this chaos. The reason is not far to seek. There was a pledge of secrecy in the Pythagorean School, and there are many stories telling how first one disciple and then another broke the pledge. The doctrines were scattered far and wide, but they were not understood, probably not even by those who divulged them. From time to time, some initiate of the Mysteries, like Iamblichus, might understand better than others, but he would not dare speak openly what he knew. This condition no longer prevails to the same degree, for *The Secret Doctrine* is an interpretation, as well as an exposition, of the Wisdom Religion, of which Pythagoras is said to have revealed so many phases of paramount importance to our race and cycle. One may suggest a reason why the keys, so long preserved in the sanctuary, now rest in our hands. Modern science, though groping in the dark, had actually uncovered more than one truth of the Mysteries, and it was necessary—as it appears—to counteract the certainty of the misapplication of that knowledge by some publication of its basic meaning.

Using *The Secret Doctrine*, the student may hope to read a little between the lines of half-forgotten Pythagorean sentences, and to weld the fragments into something resembling an ordered whole. The task is comparable to that of deciphering the Christian Gospels. In both cases, there is a record of Mysteries imperfectly understood by the transcribers. In both cases, also, we must take certain facts for granted, even when incapable of demonstration according to some of the canons of modern scholarship. The historical reality of the Master Christ is sufficiently proved by the undeniable impression which he has left upon subsequent generations. No fiction could possibly have worked such wonders. Similarly, though of course not to the same degree, we may observe the potent results which have proceeded from the body of special doctrines known as Pythagorean; and those doctrines must, by the very nature of things, have first found expression through the mind and heart of a very extraordinary man.

The contradictions of the sources begin with the accounts of the time and place of Pythagoras' birth. Fortunately, neither point is of vast importance. It is certain that his life covered the greater part of the Sixth Century B.C. He

[2] The chief sources are Book VIII of the *Lives of the Philosophers* by Diogenes Laertius (c. 225 A.D.) the *Life of Pythagoras* by Porphyry (233–304 A.D.) and the *Life of Pythagoras* by Iamblichus (c. 330 A.D.). There are important references by Plato, Aristotle, Philolaus, Cicero, Plutarch, and Clement of Alexandria. The *Golden Verses* were a late compilation, but probably contain many stanzas dating from the time of Pythagoras. Pythagoras himself left no exoteric writings.

was probably born on the isle of Samos, in the Ægean Sea, near the coast of Asia Minor.

His father, Mnesarchus, a rich merchant of Samos, seems not to have been an Ionian Greek, but an Etruscan or Pelasgian, of the old race which, centuries earlier, had created the Ægean and Cretan civilizations. According to an illustrious author in *Five Years of Theosophy* (pp. 170, 209), the Pelasgians were a very ancient stock, having affinities with the Atlantean survivors who left Cyclopean monuments in many parts of Europe. If Pythagoras were half Pelasgian by race, he came prepared, even by physical heredity, for the task of blending in his personality two streams of consciousness, Pelasgian and Hellenic, Atlantean and Aryan.

One of the Pythagorean birth stories concerns a pronouncement of the Delphic oracle, in which Apollo assumed the paternity of the child and endowed him with glory and wisdom. Iamblichus, giving the oracle, does not conclude that Pythagoras was the physical son of Apollo, God of Harmony and Regent of the Sun. After hearing the words of the God, Mnesarchus changed the name of his wife from Parthenis (*parthenos*, a virgin) to Pythais, the beloved of the Pythian Apollo, slayer of the Dragon. The association of Pythagoras with the doctrine of the Virgin Birth indicates the spiritual rank attributed to him by those who were versed in the Mysteries. The whole account reads like a parable of initiation, especially when one recollects the symbolical correlation between the Dragon and Adeptship (*Secret Doctrine*, II, 501, ed. 1888). Because of his spiritual union with Apollo, Pythagoras was sometimes identified with Apollo himself, in that God's aspect as the Hyperborean. In Greek mythology, the Hyperborean land was the far-off northern country, beyond winter and storm, where dwelt the Gods under the rule of the Sun (*Secret Doctrine*, II, 7). Many reminiscences entered into this geographical reverie, but, among them, one may detect a reference to the Lodge.

When Pythagoras came to the Greek town of Croton in Italy, to begin his public mission, he was at least forty years old. Fame had preceded him, telling of his majestic stature and divine beauty, his travels throughout the known world, his trials and initiations, his magical powers and occult knowledge. The emotional and erratic life of the Greek city was stilled for a moment by contact with the austere and serene consciousness of the occultist. The Senators received him in honour as a sage (*sophos*), though he disclaimed this proud title for that of *philosophos*, a lover of wisdom. To the people he appeared in the form of a physician of souls, cooling the flame of wrong desire and converting its hidden fire into aspiration. It is said that two thousand citizens were converted by his first exhortation.

Who was this august being, moving among men like a God, and turning multitudes from frivolity by the force and nobility and charm of his presence? We know little enough,—though, perhaps, we know as much as most of the Greeks who saw and heard him. This at least is certain, that he appeared in the arena of active work after years of the most rigorous trial and preparation. That early period of his life is reflected in the itinerary of his wanderings through

many lands. One may well believe that he travelled far and wide, in literal truth; but his journeys also have a symbolic meaning, signifying stages of initiation, whereby the wisdom of the archaic nations was made an integral part of his consciousness, so that he might in turn transmit it as a trust and heritage to his race.

For his purposes, physical travel must have been a necessity. It was a time of intense and widespread spiritual activity. Within Greece itself, there was a revival of the ancient movement of Orphism. In China, Confucius and Lao-Tse were making their two-fold appeal to reason and intuition. Above all, in India, the Buddha was founding a World-Religion. There was only one way of assimilating this new and vigorous life,—to go to its sources, far and near. It was impossible to gather information by any other process, for there did not yet exist in the West a capital of learning, like the later Athens and Alexandria.

Wisdom does not fail to use opportunity. Pythagoras seems to have begun his travels as the commercial representative of his father and, in this way, to have visited the centres of Greek life—Delos, Miletus, Delphi, Crete. He absorbed what they had to give him, especially seeking initiation into the phases and degrees of the Orphic Mysteries. Orphism, which is said to have been brought to the West by the Rajput Arjuna, was associated with the Ægean and Minoan civilizations. Its three great *foci* were Samothrace, Phrygia and Crete, where its ritual was preserved in the cults of the Kabeiri and of the Idæan Dactyls. In general, we may think of Orphism as teaching the release of the Soul from the prison of the body by purification and transmutation leading to Self-knowledge. This process was symbolized by many myths,—the descent of Orpheus to Hades, the death and re-birth of Dionysius, the war of the Gods with the Titans or Nature-Forces. But it appears that Orphism had become decadent long before the time of Pythagoras, and that its devotees had lost the keys which might unlock their secrets. Even though Orphism contained in essence all the truths which Pythagoras was to seek in Egypt and the East, they remained hidden, because their custodians had forgotten the way to them. When Pythagoras returned to Greece years later, he came as one who had rediscovered the way. He seems to have regarded himself as the appointed renovator of Orphism, and sometimes assumed the Mystery-name of Orpheus, probably when he addressed his disciples with the authority of a hierophant.

Before he left Greece, he studied natural science and metaphysics in the School of Thales at Miletus. Thales and his successor, Anaximander, had given public expression to certain doctrines which Thales had probably brought from Egypt, but which he interpreted in scientific rather than in religious terms. Paramount among these was the teaching that Nature is a process governed by laws of universal scope, which may be comprehended, to some degree, by the human mind. Pythagoras owed much to the Milesian School,—just how much it is impossible to say, because we have no way of knowing exactly what he himself brought back from Egypt. But the science of Thales and Anaximander foreshadows the science of Pythagoras. Their impersonal

view of Nature as intelligible Law, anticipates his use of the term, kosmos or order, to designate the principle of the world.

Among those from whom he sought instruction, we can discern no special teacher, unless it be Pherecydes of Syros,—according to Cicero, the first of the Greeks who taught the reincarnations and immortality of the human Soul. Little more is known of him, but he must have been a remarkable person to have earned the devotion of Pythagoras. It is said that Pythagoras laid aside temporarily his work at Croton and went to Delos to comfort the last days of his old instructor.

We are told that Pythagoras visited Egypt, Judæa, Phœnicia, Chaldæa, India; but the biographers give few details, and most of these bear signs of exoteric manipulation. Porphyry explains that Pythagoras was the first foreigner to enter the higher degrees of the Egyptian *arcana*, and that he attained this end only after every obstacle had been set in his path by the priests of Memphis, Heliopolis and Thebes. When the Persian King, Cambyses, invaded Egypt, Pythagoras was made a prisoner of war. This apparent misfortune turned to his advantage, for he was given passage to Chaldæa in the train of the King's army, and was released from custody through the influence of a Greek physician at Babylon. He then placed himself under the tutelage of the Chaldæans and the Magi, and probably at this time visited India,[3] though few details are given as to this journey. Finally, about 532 B.C., he appeared again in the Greek world, at the gates of Croton.

These scraps of information can hardly form the basis of a "travelogue." Some scholars have not hesitated to describe the journeys of Pythagoras as almost wholly mythical. But there may be significance in the very absence of detail, in the very silence of the biographers. Pythagoras would not have travelled like an ordinary person, for gain or amusement or excitement. It is at least a probable hypothesis that he was seeking the centres of occult learning, where it was still possible for a few Adepts to dwell. If such were his object, he would have passed without noise from one place to another. One must read between the lines of the scanty fragments, or not at all. Let us ask the question boldly, though the answers be obscure and halting: what may the Adepts of these many lands have taught him?

From the Phœnicians, says Porphyry, Pythagoras learned the nature of numbers and the significance of their proportions, and, for that purpose, entered a college of prophets established by Moschus (Moses?). Byblos, Tyre and Mount Carmel were celebrated in antiquity for their Mysteries, where the Syrian initiates may have laid emphasis upon some form of the Kabbala. The Kabbala was, in part, a system of occult arithmetic, wherein the hidden powers of Nature were traced through their numerical correspondences. Little more can be said, for the excellent reason that the tentative knowledge of the present writer ends with that statement. Yet, even this little may indicate one of the sources of the Pythagorean numeral symbolism.

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[3] Philostratus: *Life of Apollonius*, VIII, 7.

In Egypt, it is asserted, he studied geometry. That term means "measurement of the Earth," but the student will reflect that what is true of the Earth, as macrocosm, is, by analogy, true of man as the microcosm of the Earth; and that the "measurement of man," or Self-knowledge, may have been a most important function of the geometry which was taught in the sanctuaries of Egypt. In any event, occult geometry must be concerned with dynamic realities, not with their illusory, static reflections. As a matter of fact, the *applications* of mathematics, even by physical science, are dynamic enough, to mention only such simple acts as sailing a vessel or firing a cannon.

In Egypt, likewise, he learned the symbolic method of teaching, whereby a sentence, commanding some physical action or abstinence from action, conveys a concealed purport, revealed to him who executes the command faithfully, with an ardent desire for Truth in his heart.

The Chaldæans instructed Pythagoras in astronomy. Here, again, there are meanings within meanings. There is an astronomy which studies the physical appearance of the stars, and their positions as points, fixed or moving, within the cosmic sphere. There is another astronomy, which conceives each visible light of space as an integration of the Universe, specially manifesting a unique principle, which is present, however, to a lesser degree, latent or active, throughout the height and depth of Nature, in every atom and conglomeration of atoms. We shall return to this question in connection with the Pythagorean doctrine of the "harmony of the spheres."

By the Magi he was instructed in the significance of purifications and of ritual, and in the "right conduct of life." This simple statement may well refer to the "Great Work" of the Magi,—the conversion of human nature into its divine prototype. To that end were instituted all disciplines and all sacred ceremonials, and the right conduct of life, which is symbolized in the rites of the Mysteries, is the adjustment of personal consciousness to the laws of the divine Unity, which are the laws of life itself.[4]

In India, Pythagoras was known as Yavanacharya, the Greek sage. In *Five Years of Theosophy* (pp. 171, 193) occur some references to this stage of his travels. Here, he seems to have added to the astronomical knowledge by which an initiate is said to direct his course. The relations between astronomy and history may be closer than is supposed. The cycles of planetary movements in space are correlated with the successive emergence and disappearance of the states and principles of human consciousness. In this sense, the destiny of a civilization is written in the stars, and the Adept, who co-operates with Nature, must put in practice a science of divine husbandry, marking and calculating the procession of centuries and of seasons within the Great Year.[5]

The scene of Pythagoras' active work was Magna Græcia, the group of Greek

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[4] The name of the Magian initiate who instructed Pythagoras, is given as Zabratus or Nazaratus (cf. the Hebrew *nazar*, to dedicate or consecrate).

[5] There is evidence that he visited the Druids. But, in view of his recorded relations with the priests of the Hyperborean Apollo in Scythia, it is likely that these were the Druids referred to. The country north and west of the Black Sea was inhabited by the Getæ and other "Celtic" tribes, probably related to the military and priestly caste which Julius Cæsar found in Gaul and Britain.

city-states in southern Italy. Many of the towns were very old, dating from Pelasgian times, so that one must modify the usual view that Magna Græcia was of late colonial origin. The Italian Greeks were not provincials, isolated from the main stream of Hellenic life; they were wealthy, aggressive and enterprising, and, during the period of Greek ascendancy, rose to a high level of individual achievement, especially in experimental science and metaphysical speculation.

Possibly Pythagoras chose Magna Græcia as his field for reasons analogous to those which prompted the Lodge in its choice of America as the birthplace of the present Theosophical Society. In spite of its antiquity, the culture of Magna Græcia seems to have been less rich in memories and traditions than was that of Greece proper. A relative poverty of tradition may, for creative purposes, be quite necessary, since tradition is a mould confining the forces of a people, and the transmutation of old things into new, which constitutes true progress, becomes difficult, if not impossible, after a certain stage in the hardening of tradition has been passed. Like our physical bodies, civilizations grow old and die by a process of ankylosis.

Pythagoras was received in Italy with acclamation and honour, though he refused official rank. Unofficially, he became an arbiter, to whom states and individuals brought their disputes. He made peace between the cities and raised everywhere the tone of public and private morals. In particular he urged the governing caste to remember their responsibility towards the governed, who were confided to their care by the Gods. During this first period of his work, Pythagoras took an active part in the life of the city, addressing the people in temple and gymnasium and market-place.

But Pythagoras was not primarily a reformer striving to convert temporarily vast groups of men and women. The public phase of his teaching was preliminary,—a preparing of the ground. His deeper purpose was soon revealed, nor did it differ from the object of every Lodge Messenger of whom we have record. He gathered together a few individuals to be trained as disciples, and to form a "nucleus of universal brotherhood."

Such was the beginning of the Pythagorean School or Order, established at Croton, and later represented by branches in other cities of Magna Græcia. It was to be a "living book of discipleship," reproducing in human nature the hierarchy and the harmony of Cosmic Nature. It was a revival of the Order of Orpheus, conducted by an Orphic initiate; but, above all, it was the collective manifestation of the genius of a new race, the treasury guarding the gifts of a new cycle.

The Order expanded rapidly, especially among the nobles. It was not a political organization, as may be demonstrated by reference to its rules. But, as individuals holding a definite set of values, the Pythagoreans actually influenced the political life of the cities,—and this for two reasons. They were Greeks, for whom political activity was almost obligatory, and most of them belonged to the ruling class. Of course, the teaching of Pythagoras might be interpreted as favouring aristocratic government and a hierarchical order of

society. The whole trend of his thought was politically conservative, affirming respect for existing laws and caution against all sudden changes of polity.

The power and influence of the Order soon conflicted with the revolutionary spirit, which had spread from the Ægean lands to Italy. The rising race of demagogues found their path effectively blocked by a united group of souls dedicated to the service of truth and honour. Naturally, they selected the Order as the object of their particular enmity, insinuating that it was a secret society of aristocrats, leagued together for the exploitation of the masses. We may believe their attacks would have failed, if the Order itself had stood firm. There are dark hints of failures and treasons within the School. Eventually the most dangerous foes of the Pythagoreans, the strategists of the revolution, were not plebeians, but nobles, who had been expelled from the School and who sought vengeance at any cost.

The first serious trouble broke out at Sybaris, 511 B.C., when the democrats set up a "committee of public safety" and began a systematic slaughter of the nobles. Among those who sought sanctuary in Croton, were some Pythagoreans. The Sybarite *soviet* demanded the surrender of the refugees and offered the alternative of war. Croton accepted war as an honourable necessity, entrusting command of the army to a Pythagorean, Milo, the famous athlete. The Sybarites were defeated and their city reduced to ruins.

Thereupon, the *Jacobins* of Croton raised the outcry that the aristocrats, more specifically the Pythagoreans, had appropriated all the spoils. They called a mass meeting under the presidency of a renegade noble, Cylon, and drafted a platform of "reforms." That platform provides an argument for reincarnation, at least for the reincarnation of some of our own "advanced" thinkers: for example, it demanded that the Constitution be changed to make the magistrates responsible to the popular assembly. Cylon, however, had not called the meeting merely to pass resolutions,—as events soon proved.

The leaders of the Pythagoreans had met at the house of Milo for shelter and counsel. Here they were soon besieged by a mob, which set fire to the building. Only Pythagoras and two disciples escaped, the others perishing in the flames, or meeting a more brutal death at the hands of the populace.

Pythagoras found refuge at Metapontum, where he died in seclusion and obscurity. Cicero, visiting Metapontum nearly five centuries later, was shown the house where the sage passed his last days, and the chair which he used.

His death, like his birth and, indeed, his life, is wrapped in mystery. It is likely that he lived to witness the complete outer collapse of his work. The Pythagorean Order was destroyed, not only in Croton but throughout Magna Græcia, for everywhere the revolution extirpated it. In the next century there were mathematicians, philosophers, even saints, calling themselves Pythagoreans, but they were not members of the original Pythagorean Order, since the Order as a living unit had ceased to exist.

One can hardly over-estimate the dire effects of this initial failure of the Greeks. It must have contributed to the "bad Karma" which misdirected the Platonists. It may have forced upon the Lodge a radical change of plan,

involving the whole destiny of the Greeks. It has been suggested that Greece, however glorious its beginnings, failed shamefully in the end to realize its promise.

His disciples failed, at least as a body; but who will say that Pythagoras himself died a broken and defeated man? To speak thus would reveal a complete misunderstanding. The occultist enters into battle, discounting in advance all outward appearances of victory and defeat, for his real work is not in time, but in Eternity, where failure cannot be. Therefore, the whole expression of his life remains in the world, as a record which no hand can erase from human consciousness, and which future generations may read even if his contemporaries refused to open their eyes. That is why it is profitable for us to-day to study the constitution of the Order which embodied his purpose.

The Pythagorean School was planned as a likeness of the Order of the Universe, and was to reflect that image downwards to the eyes of mankind. Without directly interfering in human affairs, it would stand as an example and model always present to the consciousness of those within its sphere of influence. It was to be the paradigm of Western civilization.

The Universe, as conceived by Pythagoras, is harmony, being the concordance of the non-eternal with the Eternal; and this is true both of the world as a whole and of all that it contains. By such attunement the Immortal is endowed with Self-consciousness, and the mortal is immortalized. It was this process, in its human phase, which Pythagoras sought to explain and to forward in the sacred doctrine (*hieros logos*) and arcana (*aporrheta*)[6] of his Order.

The symbol which he chose as best reflecting the divine harmony, was friendship (*philotes*). The School was—in a very real sense—a society of friends. Many of the axioms of friendship seem to have been passwords of the Order: "All is equal among friends"; "A friend is another self"; "Friendship should make one Soul of many." A beautiful phrase of Iamblichus reproduces the spirit, if not the actual words, of a vow of the disciples. "They exhorted one another not to divide the God within themselves" (*Life of Pythagoras*, c. xxxiii.). There are many stories—like that of Damon and Pythias—which illustrate the devotion uniting these men while their Master was still in their midst.

Obviously our term, friendship, does scant justice to the union of disciples. Such a relation is not an easy objective for the men of our cycle. It is attained only by long and hard labour, by continuous self-sacrifice; therefore Pythagoras instituted a discipline which would lead men by stages to the perfection of divine life. In close connection with the discipline, he gave instruction in the science of Nature,—first, the discipline; then the knowledge which was necessary to make the discipline effective, to provide for the disciple a field of action. The postulant who presented himself for admission, was given no

[6] *Aporrheta:* "secret instructions upon esoteric subjects given during the Egyptian and Grecian Mysteries." *Theosophical Glossary*, p. 26.

promise of personal wisdom and power. It was assumed that he had received an intimation of Truth, and that he desired to devote his life to the service of this Truth which he had glimpsed; for which purpose he would be willing to submit to a Rule designed for all who desired to become lovers of wisdom (*philosophoi*).

The keynote of the disciple's effort was voluntary obedience. The greatest care was taken to make this elementary principle clear, and to prevent those who were obviously unfitted, from needlessly complicating their existence by pledging themselves to an undertaking which they could not carry out. Thus, before a postulant was accepted, he was led before Pythagoras, who examined thoroughly his mental and especially his moral endowments.

Once admitted to the first degree, the novices were subjected to a probation lasting from two to five years. Their courage was tested by physical and moral trials; and they were given opportunities to prove and to strengthen their fidelity to Pythagoras and to one another, for the probationary period was designed as an apprenticeship in all virtues and, most of all, in friendship. In particular, there was the trial of silence, which probably only implied that they were to demand no explanation of the teachings given, and were to make no written comments thereon. The teacher remained unknown, concealed by a curtain from their sight. They were not admitted to the sanctuary, where were the sacred symbols revealing the secret doctrine of the Order. Therefore the novices were sometimes called the exoterics (*hoi exo*),—those who remained outside.

The second degree, as we may term it, was open to those who had completed their novitiate and who were then known as scientists or mathematicians (*hoi mathematikoi*, those who are disposed to learn). The mathematicians were freed from the obligation of silence as regarded their intercourse with one another. They were expected to act as instructors of the novices. There is naturally much obscurity as to the relations of the various degrees. According to the most probable account, the mathematicians were not admitted to the full confidence of Pythagoras, for their eyes were still veiled, though their minds were illumined. Like the *Mystai* of Eleusis, they seem to correspond to probationary chelas, disciples of the disciples of a Master.

If this view be correct, the references to a limited group of personal disciples of Pythagoras will become clear.[7] These constituted the third degree and were the true Esoterics (*hoi eso*) or Seers (*epoptai*).

The rules of the Order have come down to us in fragmentary descriptions or in aphorisms. Some of the contradictions which we find, obviously are not contradictions at all, being merely changes of the Rule for the different degrees. In general, the stricter regulations presumably related to the higher degrees. It appears that a cloistered life was not required of the members. They were to lead a life of devotion and self-control in the world or out of it—the outward

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[7] An anonymous writer (Photius, *cod.* CCLIX) describes three classes, " the Pythagorics or friends of Pythagoras, the Pythagoreans or disciples of these, and the Pythagorists or exoterics."

condition was of secondary importance. Some members formally gave their personal property to the School, and dwelt together in monastic seclusion, but others—including some of high rank, like Milo—participated in public life. It is significant, that, when a member was expelled, all his donations to the Order were returned to him with interest.

There was provision both for the active and for the contemplative life. Women were admitted to the School, apparently to its highest degrees. One of them, Theano, was long remembered as a saint.

The first act of the Pythagorean, after awakening, was to meditate on the duties of the day, to seek their meaning as revelations of the Divine Will, and to gain courage and strength for their performance. Then, in solitude and recollection, he strolled through some sacred grove towards a temple. Afterwards, in order to attune the body to the disposition of the Soul, he engaged in certain prescribed gymnastic exercises, accompanied by the music of the lyre.

In the evening, after the day's work was done, he once more retired to a sacred grove, this time in company with two or three companions. There followed the mystic banquet, modelled on the Orphic supper of bread and wine, in which we cannot but discern a prototype of the Eucharist and of the Christian love-feast (*agape*). At this repast in common, the companions were grouped at tables of ten. Before the disciples separated for the night, the youngest read aloud some scripture, or verses of Homer and Hesiod, which were interpreted by an older student. Thereafter, the disciples took leave of one another, retiring to their chambers or rejoining their families. Before sleep, the student passed over in memory the events of the day, endeavouring to discern what he had done aright and what amiss, and preparing himself by honest search for a more courageous and intelligent effort during the following day.

The rules of the Order laid great emphasis on the sanctity of a pledged word. The disciple was not to take a special oath, when he intended to keep a promise; for he should never make a promise which he did not intend to keep. By the practice of such fidelity, he not only developed within himself the integrity necessary to true friendship, but he imitated the Logos, by whose oath the world is maintained in existence,—since, without the pledge of the Immortal to the mortal, what could sustain the Universe?

Chastity was recommended for the higher degrees, and probably was enforced for the highest. The same may be said of the dietary regulations, of which there are so many conflicting records. Some meats were certainly forbidden for all students, and there are many references, often humorous, in ancient and modern literature, to the Pythagorean interdiction of beans. The reasons given for these restrictions and abstinences often remind the student of the arguments advanced for the vegetarian régime of the Buddhist monks. Thus, meat-eating was deemed wrong because it involved the destruction of bodies animated by a life akin to our own; also it was said to convey to the nature the peculiar qualities of the animal which was eaten.

The asceticism advocated by Pythagoras was tempered by gentleness, common-sense and the recognition of beauty. Simple pleasures were not for-

bidden, though they should not be allowed to interfere with the smallest duty. As Pythagoras said, "No man ever yields to desire, without feeling inferior to himself."

According to the Pythagorean teaching, the sin of selfishness does not differ in essence from the sin of suicide. When one who had served the Order, broke his vows and became a deserter, his companions erected a cenotaph to him and thenceforward regarded him as dead.

All that the disciples possessed belonged, as was asserted, not to their personal selves, but to that God whose priests they were and whose consciousness they shared. The Pythagoreans had a password or mantram: "The Master has spoken (*autos epha, ipse dixit*)." This was not the blind affirmation of some statement of fact attributed to Pythagoras. It is far more likely to have been a sentence to be repeated in a moment of moral danger, to remind the disciple that the God, whose will Pythagoras had interpreted for him, would stand beside him as an inseparable ally, the Warrior, in the forthcoming struggle.

S.L.

(*To be continued*)

Rightness expresses of actions what straightness does of lines; there can no more be two kinds of right action than there can be two kinds of straight lines.—SPENCER.

PREPARATION FOR T. S. WORK

ROBBIE, aged three, had been in the country for the whole summer. Every Sunday morning he had been taken to Sunday School, and when the circus came to town he had been taken there also. A cynical uncle asked him which he preferred, and Robbie, with much seriousness, gave his reasons for preferring the circus: "In Sunday School they say, 'You mus' be good; you mus' be good'—but they no say so at the circus." It is not fair to blame Robbie for his faulty comparison, his experience of public gatherings being limited to two, yet many of his elders make, in the privacy of their own minds, comparisons equally invalid and then act from them. To the small boy, those hundreds of people in the circus did one startling or amusing thing after another, just because they were delightful people who liked to conduct their lives in that way, instead of in the usual prosaic manner. He did not dream that the circus had its code, making rigorous demands on the imagination, the energy, and the will of its performers, and definitely restricting their liberty of action. He delighted in the appearance of ease and pleasure with which each "act" was surrounded, never suspecting that the circus required the complete concealment of any anxiety, fatigue, or pain. Surely, even the tan-bark has its "You mus' be good," but it directs this admonition to its performers, not to its audience. Is this not true of every calling in life, high or low? Which one can be worthily followed without loyal adherence to its particular "You mus' be good," as expressed in the ideals or traditions of that art, craft, or profession?

Some people have looked to the T. S. as a safe refuge from the exhortations of the religion in which they were born. It may so serve as long as they are content to be merely spectators, but when they are aroused with a desire to participate in the conflict which is being waged by the Movement,—they must discover that it, too, has its code. At least this was the conclusion reached by a group of T. S. members who had gravitated together at the Convention Tea. They had discussed, with much earnestness, the immediate and practical applications of what had been said at the morning session of the Convention, about the Society as a vehicle for the ideal of chelaship and of service of the Masters. They wanted to do more for the T. S.—how were they to do it? As they were struggling with this question, they managed to corral a member of the Executive Committee, and put their question to him, saying that they were seeking ways of giving more definite expression to the new enthusiasm for service that had been kindled in their hearts. How were they to do it? Self-conquest had been stressed as the greatest contribution; they saw the need for that, but they also longed to be of more help in the outer work of the Society. Was there no spot at which willing hands could grip the rope, and, by pulling steadily, release others from some of the routine work?

"My thought would not turn first to routine work at headquarters," was the reply. "Our supreme need would appear to me to be elsewhere,—in self-conquest, to use your term. However, as the Movement has always been able to use every talent really devoted to it, let us see what is now offered. How many would volunteer to do accurate, rapid, and well arranged typing—there is occasional need for that?"

Everybody looked regretfully at his neighbour.

"Several of you send contributions to the QUARTERLY. Perhaps you have studied the preparation of manuscripts, and so would be willing to give the finishing touches to articles that sometimes need a little sandpapering."

At this suggestion, a number looked hopeful. One said that he might do certain things, but that punctuation was a mystery to him; he never even attempted it. Another had no notion about what constituted a sentence or a paragraph—someone else would have to look out for those, in any work he might be asked to do. A third liked to work over manuscripts, but admitted that he found it necessary to re-write nearly every sentence, when he was asked to do a bit of polishing. Another had no patience with the demand for consistency in the use of capital letters, italics, etc., even within the limits of a single article. It was becoming clear that none of the volunteers was competent to undertake this piece of routine work. Nothing daunted, however, one of them said: "Perhaps it might be better if we were to suggest what we think we could do to help. No task is too humble for me—I should be delighted to help address the envelopes for the mailing of the magazine."

"And what would be the result if you did?" quickly rejoined another member of the group. "I should want to protest against that offer, for I might never get my copy of the magazine if the post office were called upon to decipher your truly distinguished but rarely legible handwriting."

"True," admitted the first speaker, "I never cared to learn to write a readable hand."

At this point the older member was called away, by the beckoning of a sympathetic friend, and the younger members had a heart to heart talk about the situation. They considered in what respects they could qualify for excellent performance in such routine work as they had requested the chance to do. They were not lacking in natural gifts, but they discovered that they had been foolishly content to exercise their gifts, casually, without the effort to cultivate and perfect them which would have transformed the original gifts into powers for service. One man advanced the theory that Karma had been busily attempting to fit him for the niche in his Branch which his fellows clearly desired him to occupy. They felt that they needed a ready, convincing speaker, to sum up the points made by others at their public meetings. He might be able, he said, to write out such a résumé, but to speak on call before a room full of people, was impossible. Yet he could see now that in his professional life, demand after demand had been made upon him for similar work. Had he accepted this training from Karma's kind hand, he would now be of more use to the Work.

Once launched on these frank confessions of lack of preparedness, the participants were rather enjoying their conference, until one of the younger headquarters' workers shattered the calm by this question: "Is it fair that the T. S. should for ever have to teach its workers how to write, how to spell, how to add, how to be courteous? For me, it has had to do that and more; but are all the rest of you going to be sponges, too—and call that 'helping' in the Work? Take my post, it is not directly concerned with accounts, but the simple fact is that several hours a month would be saved, for me and for others, if I could do the simplest addition and subtraction quickly and correctly, instead of making mistakes for others to rectify. Still, for years I have been content to harbour my inability to add, for lack of the slight effort that would be required to turn my certainty of error into reliability."

"Come now," was the appreciative response, "do not stop there. Tell us what you intend to do about it. You have convinced us, at least, that you just must learn simple addition. Do you want us to appoint a drillmaster?"

"By all means appoint one," was the unexpected reply. "Or how about a competitive game? It might be that each one would like to select some simple accomplishment, like my adding, which he feels ought to be a part of his equipment, and train himself to do that one thing well. My experience would suggest that the bit of capacity thus acquired might well prove useful someday in the T. S. At least, our effort would, we know, constitute a real contribution, an addition to the working capital of the Society."

"There is no escape for me, I see," sighed the most energetic member present. "It was my desire, when we began talking, to do something that would really help. The very notion of more for the T. S. gave me a pleasant sensation; I saw myself confronting mountains of work which I was to accomplish by the output of great energy. Our talk has changed the picture entirely. Now I see before me an uninteresting little patch of ground, all covered with 'pucker-brush,' before which I have paused all my life. Instead of charging delightedly up hill, I have to pick my way through that. My 'pucker-brush' is *manners*. The rest of you are doubtless quite at home there, but I have pretended to myself that I could go through life being just a 'plain, blunt fellow,' and meeting situations in my own way. Now I see that I have persistently shirked the necessity of learning the right way to do things, even the tiny things of friendly intercourse. I shall just have to set myself to observe and to learn the small but important conventions of well-ordered life—how to stand, how to sit, how to speak, when to appear and when to disappear, and that host of trifles that enable the man who knows what to do with himself under all circumstances, to put others at their ease, and to bring out the best that is in them. For the T. S., that is not too much to attempt, even at my clumsy age. It may prove that certain small difficulties which, in our Branch, we have come to regard as necessary afflictions, will prove to be, not obstacles put in the path of our work, but obstacles created by the bad manners of myself, its president and oldest member. As to that, I will tell you further, when we continue this talk at the 1925 Convention Tea."—A. B. C.

NICHOLAS FLAMEL
ALCHEMIST

TO spring from the twentieth century into a world of romance and mystery, encountering things and people we cannot reduce to a formula, is said to be good for our souls, because most of us tread a beaten track, and to be jarred from our track should be as beneficial as a change from town to country, from sea-coast to mountain air. The history of Nicholas Flamel, as it has come down to us through the centuries, gives us this refreshing opportunity.

On no possible hypothesis can Flamel be treated as a myth. He was as well known in France as Roger Bacon in England. But we hear of him in two entirely different ways. His exoteric history, marvellous enough, reaches us through many sources, collected, and synthesized in translation in 1815, by Francis Barrett in his *Lives of Alchemystical Philosophers*. Most of the material in Part I of this article has been drawn from that book, which has been out of print for years.

The esoteric history of Flamel, even more marvellous, is derived from one source only; and we must leave it to the reader to determine its credibility.

Part I

Nicholas Flamel lived in France toward the end of the fourteenth century. In contrast to some alchemical students who travelled the length and breadth of Europe in their search for knowledge, he spent most of his life in Paris, living very simply in the little house where he was brought up, and earning his living as a copyist or scrivener. The date of his birth is not given, other than that he was born "in the time of Philip whose reign commenced in 1328." This was Philip VI, the Valois prince whose accession to the throne was the primary cause of the Hundred Years War, and of the distracted state of France which culminated in the life and death of Jeanne d'Arc, under Charles VII. Apparently, Flamel lived through the greater part of this unsettled time. He was not a learned man, and had only a limited education which included, however, a knowledge of Latin, and some proficiency in poetry and painting.

In the course of his work he picked up for a small sum a book which he recognized to be very old and rare, though its contents were unintelligible to him. As he himself describes it:[1]

"It was not made of paper or parchment, as other books are, but of admirable rinds (as it seemed to me) of young trees. The cover of it was brass; it

[1] See *The Lives of Alchemystical Philosophers*, by Francis Barrett; London, 1815.

was well bound, and graven all over with a strange kind of letters, which I take to be Greek characters, or some such like.

"This I know, that I could not read them, nor were they either Latin or French letters or words, of which I understand something.

"But as to the matter which was written within, it was engraven (as I suppose) with an iron pencil or graver upon the said bark leaves, done admirably well, and in fair and neat Latin letters, and curiously coloured."

The book contained, as he expresses it, thrice seven leaves, the first of each group of seven containing no lettering but having instead, painted symbols or symbolic figures. Thus the symbol heading the first seven was a virgin and serpent swallowing her up; for the second, a serpent crucified; for the third a wilderness "in midst whereof was seen many fair fountains, from whence issued out a number of serpents here and there."

From an opening line of greeting in letters of gold, from Abraham the Jew "to the nation of Jews, dispersed by the wrath of God in France," Flamel concluded that the book had been one of the treasures of Jewish literature. As the life of the Jews in France had been an eventful one in which both persecution and banishment had played a part, the loss or theft of such a work was easily explainable. Flamel's conviction that he had acquired a part of the Cabalistic writings was further strengthened by the discovery that the volume was a treatise on the transmutation of metals. He describes in detail the arrangement of the material and the various figures given—though concerning the actual instruction, he discreetly maintains silence, recognizing it as secret teaching, and obviously respecting from the beginning the obligation to secrecy which was, in a sense, implicit in the ownership of such a work—a fact which might be regarded as some indication of Flamel's own integrity of character.

Apparently the bookseller had had no idea of its value, and there is nothing to indicate how or why Flamel was immediately fired with enthusiasm by his discovery. Its contents were a complete mystery to him. He says of it, "though it was singularly well, and materially or intelligibly figured and painted, yet by that could no man ever have been able to understand it, without having been well skilled in their Cabala, which is a series of old traditions, and also to have been well studied in their books." However, alchemical students were sufficiently numerous at that time for the subject to be a part of the undercurrent of everyday thought, and in his trade as scrivener, he may well have learned something of the "Great Work." Whatever the reason, Flamel recognized at once the value of his "delicate and precious book," and immediately applied himself to its study, doing little else day and night. He says he understood the directions it gave, but could not get the necessary key to the whole—namely, could not discover what element was to be employed, the *prima materia* on which all these instructions were to be carried out.

As an experiment, he now had painted on the walls of his house the symbolic figures from two of the leaves of the book, and showed them (thus avoiding the necessity of showing the original) to all the scholars and learned men of Paris, explaining that he had found them in a book dealing with the philoso-

phers' stone. But while many ridiculed him, none could shed any light—except one man, a physician, possessed of no misgivings regarding the "teaching perch," and filled with an eager curiosity to see the precious volume. He, it seems, had dabbled to his own satisfaction in occult science, and having an inventive mind, proffered interpretations of all that Flamel disclosed to him. A part of his inventions, Flamel accepted as at least a working hypothesis, but he called a halt when it was intimated that "the pure blood of young infants" was to be regarded literally as one of the necessary concomitants to the process. Here again, Flamel's own character is apparent—his tenacity and determination—for he continued his efforts unremittingly for twenty-one years, evidently thrown off the track by the doctor's advice, and wandering, as a quaint translation expresses it, in a perfect meander from the verity. Finally he concluded that to solve the problem by his own unaided efforts was hopeless, and he "made a vow to God to demand their interpretation of some Jewish priest, belonging to some synagogue in Spain."

The Spanish Jews of that period were possessed of a very high degree of culture. (It will be recalled that Maimonides, the greatest Jew of his time, was a Spaniard.) In France, as in most of the other countries of Europe, they had been excluded from much of the life of the day, admitted only to certain occupations, and subjected at intervals to persecution and exile. In Spain, they enjoyed freedom, apparently in every particular, held high office in the service of the government, entered fully into the general life of the country, and developed their literature, science, statecraft, poetry and medicine to a marked degree. In the latter pursuits, they were of course immeasurably aided by their contact with the Moors, and it will be remembered that by way of North Africa and the Moorish influx, all the culture drawn from so many sources and centring in Alexandria was brought into Spain, and thence through the Jews to western Europe as a whole. It was doubtless because of their reputed learning that Flamel hoped to find among the Spanish Jews the solution of his mystery.

Accordingly (in 1378) he set out on pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James Compostela,—that famous place of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages about which centred the legends of the Spanish mission of St. James, the Apostle, after the Crucifixion. Completing his pilgrimage, Flamel sought the Jews in Leon with a copy of the symbolic figures—the original being kept safely at home in Paris. A converted Jew named Canches, living in Leon, not only understood the figures, but was "ravished with great astonishment and joy" to have news of the book which he said was believed to be utterly lost. Flamel, in whom caution and discretion apparently were well developed, told him guardedly that he did not doubt it would be possible to obtain sight of the book, provided he could find anyone who could explain it. Canches thereupon explained the earlier figures, and soon it was agreed that they should return to Paris together, during which journey Flamel received considerable instruction. He says of his teacher, "he most truly interpreted unto me the greatest part of my figures, in which, even to the points and pricks, he could decipher great mysteries which

were admirable to me." But the voyage—for it was thought best to go by sea from Sanson near Oviedo, in Spain, to Bordeaux in France—was either a rough one, or Canches was a poor sailor, for he died as a result of it, and was buried at Orleans, without seeing the book, the prospect of which had so transported him with joy.

Flamel returned to Paris, where he and his wife applied themselves anew to study. Shortly before his original purchase, he had married a widow, well along in years, a woman devout like himself, blessed with a sympathetic understanding, much discretion, and interests akin to his own. He had early shared with her his new discovery, "shewing her the very book, which, when she saw, she became as well pleased with it as myself, and with great delight beheld the admirable cover, the engraving, the images, and exquisite figures thereof, but understood as little of them as I. Yet it was a matter of consolation to me to discourse, and entertain myself with her, and to think what we should do, to find out the interpretation and meaning thereof." She, then, had shared his twenty-one years of labour, and she now shared in the new knowledge gained from his Jewish instructor. And again they began their labours. Flamel says that he now knew the *prima materia* or first principle—the key to the mystery—"yet not their first preparation, which is a thing most difficult, above all other things in the world." For that, three years more of effort were necessary, "during which time I did nothing but study and search, and labour . . . praying also continually unto God, and reading attentively in my book, pondering the words of the philosophers, and then trying and proving the various operations, which I thought to myself they might mean by their words.

"At length I found that which I desired, which I also soon knew by the scent and odour thereof. Having this, I easily accomplished the magistery. For knowing the preparations of the prime agents, and then literally following the directions in my book, I could not then miss the work if I would. Having attained this, I come now to projection."

We have frequently been told in theosophical writings that the higher alchemy is the transmutation of the base lower nature into the fine gold of the spiritual; and Flamel's operations, where stress is laid on each aspect—the inner and the outer—in its right proportion, make this point exceedingly clear. Flamel's own valuation of the inner aspect of the subject is shown at one point where he refers to his labours as "the lineary work of the philosophers' stone which, being perfected by anyone, takes away from him the root of all sin and evil, which is covetousness, changing his evil into good, and making him liberal, courteous, religious, devout, and fearing God, however wicked he was before. For from thenceforward he is continually ravished with the goodness of God, and with his grace and mercy, which he has obtained from the fountain of Eternal Goodness, with the profoundness of his divine and adorable power, and with the consideration of his admirable works." This does not mean, however, that he did not transmute metals, for he goes on to relate that silver was the first metal he produced—the projection being made from a pound and a half of mercury; and then, again using mercury, he produced gold, "much bet-

ter indeed than common gold, more soft also and more pliable:" Satisfied with this first operation, he nevertheless repeated it, in all three times, and his comment is significant of his frugal and temperate nature. "I had truly enough when I had once done it; but I found exceeding great pleasure and delight in seeing and contemplating the admirable works of nature within the vessels." According to Nicholas Lenglet du Fresnoy, the first projection was made on the 17th of January, 1382; the second on April 25th of the same year.

Desiring little for themselves and having now much wealth, the two devoted their riches to charity, helping many needy individuals, and giving large endowments to hospitals and churches. So great was their generosity that stories of their wealth and rumours of its source came to the ears of the King—Charles VI. Such a secret, during the Middle Ages, was anything but a comfortable possession. To conceal or withhold it from the monarch, if the fact became known, was a political offence. Its possessor at once became, in a way, a dangerous character, since, in time of war, he might go over to the enemy and throw the scales preponderatingly on the wrong side. Charles VI, therefore, sent an agent to investigate the case. According to one biographer, Flamel and his wife were found living with the utmost frugality, and the king's agent, impressed by their humble home, their simple meal of boiled greens, and the lack of anything to bear out the rumours of wealth, reported that Flamel was really needy. The biographer adds, "He then remained in peace and proceeded without further interruption in his munificent works of charity." That these were very extensive is witnessed by various facts. Flamel himself tells of founding and endowing fourteen hospitals, three chapels, and seven churches in the City of Paris, with as many more in Boulogne, together with large benefactions to individuals in need,—refraining from detailed reference to the latter "as my reward would then be only in this world, so neither could it be pleasing to the persons to whom we did it." In various places, as on the doors of a church or the face of an arch, there were carved—following that quaint Mediæval custom so familiar in Renaissance art—the figures of the donors, Flamel and his wife, usually kneeling before the figure of a saint, and with the first initial of their respective names cut in the wall beneath. Some of his benefactions were still in evidence in the early eighteenth century, when Lenglet du Fresnoy wrote his *Histoire de la Philosophie Hermétique*, in which he includes a biography of Flamel.

In the course of building churches and hospitals, Flamel ordered carved in several places some of the hieroglyphics from his book. As he himself says, he caused to be depicted "the most true and essential marks or signs of this art, yet under veils, types, and hieroglyphic covertures, in imitation of those things which are contained in the gilded book of Abraham the Jew: Demonstrating to the wise, and men of understanding, the direct and perfect way of operation and lineary work of the philosophers' stone." This passage again bears witness to his discretion. The figures were in imitation of the original—in such form that, while the wise might read, the profane should remain in ignorance.

From the dates of certain of Flamel's writings and from the last will and

testament which each left behind, biographers have concluded that his wife died between 1397 and 1413, and that his own death occurred in 1419, after he had selected his burial place, making a contract regarding it with the wardens of the church, and then disposing of his possessions to the church and to the poor. However, no more definite date than this is suggested,—and we now come to a very different version of his story.

Part II

At the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, the King of France, Louis XIV, as a part of his patronage of the arts and sciences, but perhaps also for military reasons, sent travellers into far countries, at the royal expense, for the purpose of gaining new light both on the present and on the past,—the confirmation of ancient traditions, the verification of current maps and the collection of medals, rare manuscripts and inscriptions, and other "useful curiosities." One of these travellers was a Sieur Paul Lucas who, early in life, had travelled to the near East in connection with his father's business, which had to do with precious stones. He was evidently very much a man of the world, keen, observant, sagacious, and with a ready adaptability to circumstances. Suffice it to say that in those days, when travelling was both difficult and dangerous, he continued it for thirty-five years, and, in the service of the King, visited Greece, Asia Minor, Persia, Syria, Egypt and Africa.

With the born collector's feeling for the rare and curious, he accumulated, in addition to his manuscripts and medals, a store of experiences much less tangible, but, as he says, equally precious. These he wrote down in several small volumes, two of which bear the imprint of 1712, and are dedicated to the King.[2] The writer of the Preface, a M. F **, adduces this dedication as proof positive of the authenticity of the contents and the veracity of the writer (since no one would attempt deception, in view of the sovereign's recognized qualities). He evidently fears that some of the more unusual anecdotes will meet with scant credence, however, for he makes a strong plea for a fair and open-minded hearing, and then remarks that of course there are everywhere the kind of people who, having seen nothing themselves, impudently judge of the entire world by the four villages they are familiar with.

Says Sieur Lucas[3] (translating from his quaint French):

"On the 9th I walked to Bournous-Bachy. There I joined a person of distinction of that country, who had given me an appointment, and we met in a little mosque where one of their most famous dervishes is buried. A dervish is always in charge, and places like this are intended for walking and recreation. We were admitted into a little kiosk where we found four dervishes. They showed us every possible courtesy and even invited us to eat with them. We

[2] *Voyage du Sieur Paul Lucas*, fait par ordre du roy dans la Grèce, l'Asie Mineure, la Macedoine et l'Afrique, published in Paris, 1712, "avec approbation et privilege du roy."

[3] Vol. I., Chapter xii., p. 98.

had been assured—and we immediately knew it by their conversation—that they were illustrious dervishes and true scholars. One of them was said to be from the country of the Usbecs. He seemed to be more learned than the others. I believe he was familiar with every known language. As he did not know that I am French, after having spoken Turkish for a time, he asked if I knew Latin, Spanish or Italian. I told him he might speak to me in Italian. He noticed immediately that it was not my native tongue. So, concluding that I was not from Italy, he begged me to tell him from what country I came. When he knew, he spoke to me in French like a man who had been reared in Paris.

"'What!' said I to him, 'have you lived in France?'

"He replied that he had never been there, but that he was strongly inclined to undertake the journey. I urged him to do so; and in order to persuade him I told him that there was not a kingdom on earth where people were more polite; that strangers, above all, were welcomed everywhere, and that he could expect from such a visit only the utmost satisfaction.

"'No, no,' he replied, 'I will do nothing of the sort. I should be mad to entertain such expectations. I am a scholar, so I know that I should not be let alone there. That is enough to prevent my giving the matter any further thought.'

"I assured him that he was mistaken, that someone had, without doubt, spoken ill of my country, and that France, on the contrary, was a nursery of scholars; that the king whose subject I had the honour to be had always loved them. I assured him that although I was not of these scholars by profession, his majesty, none the less, had me make at his expense the journeys in which he saw me engaged, and this in order to discover facts which still remained to be known in order to perfect the sciences—such as the herbs which could be useful in medicine; ancient monuments which might throw light on the facts of antiquity, and consequently render historical knowledge more complete; the countries also, the sight of which would serve to verify the maps. In short, I adduced proofs of the love that is felt in France for the sciences and for scholars. He attributed it all to the climate, and did not appear to agree to what I told him—except out of courtesy. He was, nevertheless, charmed to hear me speak so highly of it. He told me that he would some day betake himself thither.

"The conversation ended, the dervishes took us to their house. It is at the foot of the mountain and close to Bournous-Bachy. There we drank coffee. I took leave of them and promised to return to see them. From there I went to a nearby place, where I found three inscriptions which I have placed at the end—numbers 14, 15, and 16.

"After that I went to visit the prison, where there were accommodations for a large number of prisoners. In the middle is a well over a hundred and fifty feet deep. There they place the most criminal. There was there at that time, a man accused of abducting the wife of another, and of several other weighty crimes. From the top of the wall, bread was thrown to him, and by a cord a little pitcher full of water was lowered to him.

"That day I also went around the citadel. It is fortified by a double wall,

but the latter is in ruins. In places where there is none, the rock is cut very precipitously and there are few walls so difficult to scale.

"The 10th. The dervish of the Usbecs returned my call. I received him in the best manner that I could, and as he had seemed to me to be an antiquary, I showed him some manuscripts that I had bought. He pronounced them rare and by good authors. I will say in praise of this dervish that he was a man whose appearance even, seemed truly extraordinary. He taught me some very fine things about medicine, and promised me, subsequently, many others. 'But,' said he, 'some preparation is necessary on your part, and I hope that you will some day be in a state to profit by the light which I am able to throw upon your understanding.'

"To look at him, one would not have thought him more than thirty years old, but from his conversation he seemed already to have lived more than a century, and this one would have felt still more inclined to believe after the account which he gave of several lengthy travels he said he had made. He told me that there were seven friends who thus travelled about the world, all seven with the purpose of becoming more perfect; that when separating, they agreed upon a place of meeting, in some city, twenty years later, and that the first arrivals there never failed to await the others. This led me to believe that this time Brusa had been chosen for the meeting by the seven scholars. There were already four there, and they were so united that it was obvious no chance had brought them together but a long knowledge of each other.

"In a lengthy conversation with a learned man, one has occasion to speak of many things out of the ordinary. Religion and nature were, one after the other, the subject of our conversation. Finally we came down to chemistry, alchemy and the Cabala. I told him that all these, and above all the idea of the philosophers' stone were regarded among the most learned peoples as very chimerical sciences.

"'This should not surprise you,' he replied. 'In the first place, nothing should surprise us in this life. The true sage listens to all things without dismay, but if he possess enough moderation not to treat too bluntly the common herd, must he restrict and debase his intellect because others are incapable of comprehending that which he sees? And must he submit to the judgment of an ignorant rabble because it is unable to endure the light by which the eyes of the true sage cannot be dazzled?'

"'The word sage,' he continued, 'means a man to whom alone it belongs to be a philosopher. He has no attachment for anyone. He sees all dying and being reborn, without his experiencing the least anxiety or concern. He can obtain more riches than have the greatest monarchs, but he places all beneath his feet, and this lofty contempt renders him, even in his poverty, superior to all exigencies.'

"I interrupted him at this point. 'For all these beautiful maxims,' I said, 'the sage dies like other people. What does it matter if I have been a wise man or a fool all my life, if wisdom has no privilege over folly, and if the one prevents a man from dying no more than the other?'

"'Ah,' he added, 'I see clearly that you have never known a true philosopher. Know then that a philosopher such as I am describing, dies, in truth (for death is inherent in nature, and for exemption from it there is no warrant), but that he extends his life to its full term, that is, to the time appointed by the Creator. It has been observed that this time is a thousand years, and that it is only to that point that the sage lives. He attains it through his knowledge of the true medicine. By this means he knows how to do away with everything that hinders the functions and destroys the balance of his nature. By this means, he learns everything the knowledge of which God gave to the first man. The first man knew them through reason. But it was this same reason which deprived him of them, because, having attained to this natural knowledge, he mingled with it his own fancies and conceits. By this confusion which engendered an excessive curiosity, he made imperfect the very work of the Creator. This it is which the sage endeavours to make straight again. The animals, acting only in accordance with instinct, have preserved themselves in their original state, and live no less a time now than in the beginning of the world. Man is much more perfect, but has he made use of that distinction? And has he not, through his own fault, lost the wonderful privilege of living a thousand years, which he should have guarded with all possible care?'

"'It is this that the true sages have rediscovered, and, that you may no longer be mistaken about it, it is this that is called the philosophers' stone—which is not a chimerical science as the would-be scholars think, but a very real one. Furthermore, it is known to the few that avarice or dissoluteness kill, and that desire for life brings death.'

"Surprised by all that I had heard, I exclaimed, 'Do you mean to say that all who have found the philosophers' stone live a thousand years?'

"'Without doubt,' he replied, in a very serious tone. 'When God favours some mortal with this wonderful knowledge, he has it in his power to live a thousand years, as the first man did.'

"I told him that in our country there were some of these happy mortals who were said to have had the life-giving knowledge, but certainly they had not lingered to such a decrepit age before repairing to the other world. But he continued, 'Do you not know that the name of philosopher is lightly given? They were not philosophers, or they must have lived the length of time I have indicated to you.'

"Finally I spoke to him of the illustrious Flamel, and I told him that in spite of the philosophers' stone, he was dead in every respect. At this name, he began to laugh at my simplicity. As I had almost begun to believe what he had already said, I was greatly astonished to see that he doubted what I asserted. Perceiving my surprise, he asked again, in the same tone, if I was foolish enough to believe that Flamel was dead.

"'No, no,' he said, 'you are mistaken. Flamel is living. Neither he nor his wife have yet known death. It is not three years since I left them both in the Indies, and he is one of my most faithful friends. He was about to tell me the time when they had made each other's acquaintance, but he checked him-

self and said he wanted to tell me Flamel's story which doubtless was not known in my country.

"'Our sages,' he continued, 'although rare in the world, are found equally in all sects, and in this respect are little superior one to the other. In the time of Flamel, there was one belonging to the Jewish faith. In the early part of his life he had bound himself not to lose sight of his brothers' descendants, and knowing that the majority of them had gone to live in France, his desire to see them impelled him to leave us in order to make the journey. We did all that we could to dissuade him, and several times he changed his plans because of our advice, but finally his extreme desire led him to go, with the promise, however, of rejoining us as soon as possible. He arrived in Paris which was, then as now, the capital of the kingdom. There he found that his father's descendants were held in high esteem among the Jews. Among others, he met a Rabbi who appeared to desire to become a scholar—that is to say, who sought the true philosophy and occupied himself with the Great Work. Our friend entered into a close friendship with him, and gave him much enlightenment. But as the *prima materia* requires a long time, he contented himself with putting down in writing the whole science, and to prove to the Rabbi that these instructions could be relied upon, he made projection in his presence of thirty ocques [an ocque weighs three pounds] of metal which he turned into the most pure gold.

"'The Rabbi, filled with admiration for our brother, made every effort to keep him there. This was useless, for he would not break the promise he had given us. Finally the Jew, unable to obtain anything further from him, changed his friendship to mortal hatred, and the avarice which was already overcoming him led him to conceive the base design of extinguishing one of the lights of the Universe. But first dissimulating, he begged the sage to do him the honour of spending some days with him, and during this time, with unheard of treachery, he killed him and took all his medicine. His dreadful deeds could not remain long unpunished. The Jew was exposed, put in prison, and for other crimes of which he was convicted, he was burned alive. The persecution of the Jews of Paris commenced shortly after, and as you know, they were all expelled.

"'Flamel, more tolerant than the majority of the Parisians, had no objection to associating with certain Jews. He was regarded among them as a man of recognized honesty and integrity. For this reason a Jewish merchant decided to entrust to him his records and all his papers, persuaded that he would not make bad use of them and that he would be entirely willing to save them from the general conflagration. Among the papers were those of the Rabbi who had been burned, and the books of our Sage. The merchant, without doubt occupied with his trading, had paid little attention to them. But Flamel, who examined them more closely, noted representations of furnaces, of alembics or chemist's retorts, and of other vessels, and rightly judging that this might be the secret of the Great Work, he believed he ought not to let the matter rest there. As the books were in Hebrew, he had the first page translated. Con-

firmed in his belief by this brief fragment, he adopted the following course, desiring to be prudent and to avoid discovery. He went to Spain, and as there were Jews nearly everywhere, in each place he went he would beg one of them to translate one page of his book. Having translated the entire book by this means, he set out for Paris again. On his way he made a faithful friend whom he took with him to engage in the Great Work, and to whom he planned eventually to disclose his secret. But the friend was carried off before his time by an illness, so Flamel returned home, determined to work with his wife. They attained their goal, and having in the process gained great riches, they caused to be erected several large public edifices and enriched several private individuals.

"'Fame is sometimes a very troublesome thing, but a sage knows by means of his wisdom how to rid himself of embarrassment. Flamel realized that he would be arrested if he were supposed to have the philosophers' stone, and after the publicity which his liberality had aroused, it was not likely to be long before this science was attributed to him. So, like a true philosopher, caring little to live in the minds of his fellowmen, he devised a means of escape, causing an announcement to be made both of his own death and that of his wife. By his advice, she feigned illness which took its course, and at the time she was pronounced dead, she was in reality on her way to Switzerland, where she had been told to await her husband. In her stead were buried a piece of wood and some clothing, and that all due ceremony might be observed, this was done in one of the churches which she had had built. At length, Flamel adopted the same artifice himself. As practically anything may be had for money, he met with no difficulty in prevailing upon the physicians and ecclesiastics. He left a will in which he took pains to request that he be buried with his wife and that a pyramid be erected over their burial place. Then a second piece of wood was interred, and the sage himself went to rejoin his wife. From that time, they have both led a philosophic life, now in one country and now in another. This is the true story of Flamel, and not that which you believe it to be nor that which was foolishly supposed at Paris where few people have knowledge of the true wisdom.'

"This account seemed to me, and in truth is, very extraordinary. I was the more surprised by it, since it was told me by a Turk, who, I believed, had never set foot in France. However, I relate it merely as a historian, and I omit several other things still less credible, which he told me nevertheless very positively. I will content myself with remarking that ordinarily we have a very poor opinion of the science of the Turks, and that the man of whom I am speaking possesses a rarely gifted nature."

J. C.

THE AWAKENING TO THE SPIRIT
ATMA BODHA

ATTRIBUTED TO SHANKARA ACHARYA

FOR the sake of those whose darkness has been worn away by purifications, who have attained to peace, whose passions have been conquered, who long for liberation, this Awakening to the Spirit is set forth.

For, compared with other means, spiritual awakening is manifestly the one instrument of liberation; as there is no cooking without fire, so without wisdom, liberation is not attained.

Since they are not contraries, the works of the law cannot make an end of unwisdom; wisdom drives away unwisdom, as light the host of darkness.

Hemmed in and beset, as it were, by unwisdom, when that is destroyed, the Spirit shines forth absolute and free, as the rayed sun when the clouds depart.

For when the individual life, which has been besmeared by unwisdom, is made clean by the assiduous pursuit of wisdom, unwisdom falls away of itself, as when water is cleared by astringent powder. (5)

For the cycle of birth and death, crowded with passions and hates, is like a dream; while it endures, it appears real, but on waking, it becomes unreal.

This world, like the silver in the pearl shell, appears real only until the Eternal is known, the secondless foundation of all.

All manifold existences are built up in the eternal, all-pervading, all-penetrating Spirit, which is being and bliss, as bracelets and ornaments are formed from a single mass of gold.

Like the ether of space enclosed in many vessels, the Logos, the all-pervading Lord, entering many vestures, appears to be divided because they are divided, and shines forth absolute and pure when they fall away.

Through the power of differing vestures, family and name and state of life are overlaid on the one Spirit, as flavours and colours may be given to pure water. (10)

The physical body is formed of the five elements compounded, and is built up by deeds done in the past; it is called the dwelling in which pleasure and pain are experienced.

The subtile form is made of the five elements not compounded, and is endowed with the five vital breaths, the emotional mind, the intelligence and the ten powers of perception and action; it is the instrument through which experience is gained.

The causal vesture is said to rest on the primal, indefinable illusion of sepa-

rate existence. Let the disciple apprehend the Spirit as other than this triad of vestures.

Through union with the five coverings, the pure Spirit takes on their nature, like a clear crystal laid on a blue cloth.

As rice is separated from husk and chaff by pounding it in a mortar, so, by working vigorously for union, let the disciple separate the inner Spirit from its coverings. (15)

Though everywhere present, the shining of the Spirit is not everywhere perceived; let it be perceived in the pure intelligence, like an image in a polished mirror.

The Spirit is other than the body, the powers of perception and action, the emotional mind, the intelligence; let the disciple know the Spirit as the witness of these, ever as their king.

Because their powers of perception and action are busily engaged, the Spirit seems busily engaged to those who lack discernment, as the moon seems to race among the racing clouds.

The body, the powers of perception and action, the emotional mind and the intelligence move about after their proper objects bathed in the pure consciousness of the Spirit, as people move about bathed in the sunlight.

They attribute the qualities and works of the body and the powers to the stainless being of the Spirit because they lack discernment, as they attribute the blue of the sky to the ether of space. (20)

Because of unwisdom they imagine that the actorship of the mental vesture belongs to the Spirit, as they attribute the rippling of the water to the reflected moon.

Desires and wishes, pleasures and pains persist while the mind is awake; in dreamless sleep, when its activity ceases, they too cease; therefore they are of the mind, not of the Spirit.

As brightness is the nature of the sun, coldness of water, heat of fire, so being, consciousness, bliss, perpetual purity are the nature of the Spirit.

Through lack of discernment, linking together these two, the being and consciousness of the Spirit and the activity of the mind, the thought arises that I am actively perceiving.

There is no change in the Spirit, nor is there inherent light in the mind; the individual life, confusedly perceiving, erroneously thinks, I am the actor, I am the perceiver. (25)

Thinking the Spirit is the individual life, as the rope is thought to be the serpent, he suffers fear; but when he knows, I am not the individual life but the higher Self, he attains to fearlessness.

The one Spirit illumines the intelligence, the emotional mind and all the powers, as the lamp illumines water pots; the Self, the Spirit, is not illumined by these inert powers.

There is no need for another light to illumine the Self, for the Spirit itself is light; as a lamp needs no other lamp, the Self, the Spirit, shines with its own light.

Discarding all the vestures, according to the Scripture, It is not that, not that, let the disciple find the oneness of the individual spirit and the Supreme Spirit, according to the Scripture.

The body with its powers, born of unwisdom, is fugitive as a bubble; let the disciple find the stainless One, apart from these, affirming, I am the Eternal. (30)

Since I am other than the body, not mine are birth, decay, wasting and dissolution; since I am beyond the powers, I am not implicated in sounds and sights and sensuous things.

Since I am other than the emotional mind, not mine are pain, desire, hate and fear; so the Scripture declares, The Spirit is luminous, other than the life-breaths, other than the emotional mind;

From the Spirit are born the life-breaths, the emotional mind and all the powers, the ether, air, fire, the waters and earth, sustainer of all.

Without qualities, without action, eternal, without separateness, without stain, without change, without form, ever free am I, beyond the darkness.

I am like the ether of space, without and within all things, imperishable; ever in all ways equal, pure, detached, free from stain, immovable. (35)

Ever pure, free, the one partless, secondless bliss, the real, wisdom, endless, the Supreme Eternal, verily, am I.

The conviction that I am the Eternal, thus ceaselessly impressed upon the mind, ends the distractions of unwisdom, as the healing essence drives disease away.

Seated in a solitary place, with passion dispelled and the powers well controlled, let the disciple bring to consciousness the one Spirit, steadfastly dwelling in thought on that endless One alone.

The wise man, dissolving all visible things in the Spirit through meditation, should bring to consciousness the one Spirit, ever stainless as the ether of space.

Setting aside name and colour and all differences, the knower of the supreme reality stands firm through that which in its own nature is perfect consciousness and bliss. (40)

The distinction of knower, knowing and known does not exist in the higher Self; formed altogether of consciousness and bliss, it is self-illumined.

As the fire-stick is plied in the block, so let him direct meditation upon the Spirit; as the sparks of understanding glow, let him enkindle the fuel of all wisdom.

The former darkness is dispelled by illumination, as by the dawn; thereupon the Spirit is revealed, self-luminous, like the rayed sun.

The Spirit, though ever possessed, seems unattainable through unwisdom; when that is destroyed, the Spirit is known to be possessed, like a jewel on one's own neck.

As the man is imagined in the post, so the separate life is imagined in the Eternal; when the real existence of the individual life in the Eternal is seen, its separateness ceases. (45)

Through experience of the true being of the real, wisdom suddenly reveals itself; the unwisdom of I and mine vanishes like an error in direction.

He who has attained to union, possessing perfect wisdom, beholds all things dwelling in the Self, the Spirit, through the eye of wisdom recognizing the Spirit as One and All.

This world, verily, is Spirit, there is nought but Spirit; as all earthen pots are clay only, so the disciple beholds all as the Self, the Spirit.

Therefore, let him who has attained liberation in life, knowing this, detach himself from the qualities of his former vestures; let him become one with being, consciousness, bliss, as the grub becomes the bee.

Crossing the ocean of delusion, slaying the demons of lust and hate, he who has attained to union, perfected in peace, reigns in the paradise of the Spirit.

Detached from all outer, unenduring joys, wrapped in the joy of the Spirit, he shines, inwardly luminous, like a lamp set within a jar. (51)

Though still wearing the vesture, yet unstained by its qualities, like the ether, let the saintly sage move detached as the air, as one who knows nothing, though knowing all things.

When the vestures dissolve, let the saintly sage enter wholly into the Logos, as water in water, as air in air, as fire in fire.

The gain than which there is no higher gain, the joy than which there is no higher joy, the wisdom than which there is no higher wisdom: let the disciple know that this is the Eternal.

Beholding it, there is no more to behold; gaining it, there is no more to gain; knowing it, there is no more to know: let the disciple understand that this is the Eternal. (55)

Through and through, upward, downward, perfect, secondless being, consciousness, bliss; the one, endless, everlasting: let the disciple understand that this is the Eternal.

The imperishable, defined in the sacred sciences by excluding all that is of other nature, the one partless bliss: let the disciple apprehend that this is the Eternal.

That is in essence partless joy; fed on the fragments of that joy, according to their dignity, the high gods all rejoice.

Every substance is its being; every activity is its power; the Eternal pervades all things, as butter is everywhere present in cream.

Nor subtile, nor gross, nor short, nor long, unborn, imperishable; without form, or quality, or name: let the disciple know that this is the Eternal. (60)

Through that light shine the sun and all other lights; that is illumined by no other light; that, whereby all this is illumined, let the disciple know that this is Eternal.

Inwardly, outwardly, enveloping all, and causing this whole universe to shine, the Eternal enkindles all things, as a mass of iron glows with heat.

Though the Eternal is other than the world, yet there is nought other than the Eternal; whatever appears as other than the Eternal, is an illusion like the mirage in the desert.

Whatever is seen, whatever heard, is no other than the Eternal; and, truly known, the Eternal is secondless being, consciousness, bliss.

The eye of wisdom everywhere beholds the Spirit which is being and bliss; the eye of unwisdom beholds not, as the blind sees not the radiant sun. (65)

The individual life, enkindled by the fire of wisdom lit by hearing the sacred wisdom and by meditation, cleansed of all impurity, shines like refined gold.

For the Spirit, rising in the heaven of the heart, a sun of wisdom, dispels the darkness; all-enveloping, all-sustaining, that sun shines and illumines all.

He, for whom all spaces, places, times are one, who, putting away all other observances, worships in the shrine of the Spirit that stainless, everlasting joy that makes an end of all afflictions, knowing all things, entering into all things, attains to immortality.

C. J.

(The End)

Turn over the leaves of thy past life, and be sure to fold down where any passage of it most affects thee, and bestow thy remainder of time to correct those faults.

—Wm. Penn.

THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

XV

St. Teresa

A STUDY of the great religious orders shows that, as, with the passing years, the ardour of the monks grew cold, the lofty aspirations of the founder were often brought low, and evil began to prevail where charity once spread its cloak. This is conspicuously true in the case of those founded by Ignatius Loyola and Francis of Assisi. Loyola's immediate successor gave to the Society of Jesus that bent toward intrigue and politics which has stigmatized it as a child of the Vatican; and even before the death of Francis, his little brotherhood was warped from its original intent. That all the greater orders still survive, after centuries of vicissitude, is proof of such original vitality that new growth could be formed, even while disintegrating processes were at work. It is a recurrent fact in the history of the orders that in their periods of wretched sloth and humiliation, they are blessed by the appearance among their members, of souls that burn with the founder's zeal for their original purposes, and thus disintegration is for a time arrested, reforms are set in motion, and what seemed a dying institution is completely rejuvenated. This has happened so many times that when a student consults a book of reference, he finds in each Order[1] the subdivision into branches and branchlets which also is characteristic of the dissenting Protestant sects. Thus the movement in the ninth century which centred around Cluny, was a successful protest against the laxity prevalent in the old Benedictine monasteries. Similar protests leading to reform and restoration are found in all the orders, and often, as in the case of Cluny, the monastery (or the leader) where the revivifying process starts, gives its name to the subsequent history of the order.

The Carmelite order (the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel) varies somewhat from the others in this respect, for the founders and saints of its early period are completely eclipsed by its greatest reformer—St. Teresa.

The origin of the Carmelites is uncertain and disputed. Mt. Carmel is the hill in Palestine on which the prophet Elijah lived in hiding, during the years when Jehovah was forsaken by the Israelites who were worshipping in his stead, Baal and Ashtaroth; it is the hill on which Elijah challenged the priests of Baal to sacrifice to their god, while he offered to Jehovah a water-drenched altar and victim which were consumed by miraculous fire from Heaven. According to Carmelite legend, Elijah and his successor, Elisha, were mem-

[1] The Dominicans allege that they do their own house-cleaning systematically, so that the need for drastic reform has never arisen.

bers of a company of austere hermits who dwelt in seclusion on that hill, for prayer and self-sacrifice,—and were able to perpetuate their band until the incarnation of Christ, when they became his disciples. It was after the resurrection that the devotion of the hermits gradually centred about the Virgin Mary, and they came to call themselves the Order of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, continuing as an austere and contemplative association through early Christian times. The first documentary mention of them is in a twelfth century account, and the absence of any earlier record has led Catholic historians to declare that the legend is nothing more than a pious fancy. It is impossible to take sides in the controversy, but those who argue, from the silence of recorded history, that such a band of contemplatives could not possibly have congregated as they are alleged to have done, are certainly dogmatic beyond what is warranted, for there are well authenticated traditions of similar hermitical groups in Palestine, such as the Essenes and the Nazarites.

In 1155, when the hermits of Carmel are first mentioned, they are under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Jerusalem who had given them a strict rule. Mahomedan conquest of the Holy Land made it expedient for them to seek a new abode, and, after trying Cyprus and other localities of the Mediterranean, they completely uprooted themselves, in 1240, and journeyed to Western Europe, where conditions, especially in England, favoured them beyond expectation. In a few years they became one of the popular European orders, though popularity was gained at the cost of a general relaxation of their rule. In England, they were called "White-friars," from a distinctive white mantle worn over their brown habit. On the continent, the Carmelites were cordially welcomed in Spain and Italy, winning the financial support of noble families, as well as the sons and daughters of those families for novices.

The fate of many other institutions fell upon them—the good favour which had upbuilt the order also hastened its downfall. One particular way in which the generosity of its friends made for laxity was the practice of endowing cells in a monastery. The family that made the endowment retained the right to appoint the monk or nun who should occupy the cell. By this means, membership in what had been an austere order, might be degraded into a pension or dole bestowed by outsiders upon family connections or dependents, who without any consecration of heart or mind, mechanically observed a minimum of religious exercises.

St. Teresa, in her twentieth year, entered the Carmelite monastery of her native town. She spent twenty-eight years in its worldly and undevout atmosphere, but as she was directed and encouraged by a Divine Teacher her progress in the inner world was not hindered by her environment. Outwardly, she led an unusually active life after she received her special call to service, as is witnessed by the large number of convents in the northern and central provinces of Spain which she founded.

Other reformers, however, have done as much or more than she in the building of religious houses, and the bare statistical mention of what she

accomplished may give an impression of her energy without conveying at all the tremendous significance of her work. The importance of what she did begins to dawn upon a student when he considers the severe illnesses against which she struggled, and the endless obstacles raised in her path by men and "devils." The opinion forms, and grows into conviction, that there was more in this work of hers than is obvious,—more than the founding of monasteries for the training of Catholic saints.

Those who would study St. Teresa's life and work have the unusual advantage of a voluminous and valuable mass of material written by her own hand. One is often dependent upon narratives of a saint's life, compiled by reverent but unintelligent admirers, whose descriptions and explanations have to be discounted and re-interpreted. It is a rare privilege to have an ample supply of accessible books that come direct from the head and heart of the person we would study. She was an object of suspicion as long as she lived, suspected by ordinary people of the world as well as by ecclesiastics and the officers of the Inquisition, and it is to those suspicious individuals that we are indebted for some of her books. She was twice required to write an account of her experiences, in order that officials might have data upon which to pronounce her orthodox or heretic. She wrote with difficulty, in moments snatched from pressing duties;—the result is her *Life*, a volume of over three hundred printed pages of large size, intensely interesting, obtainable in at least two English translations. Further accusations were made against her in the years when she was planting her monasteries throughout Spain, and a grave dispute arose as to whether her houses should be tolerated or closed. Whereupon another ecclesiastic bade her write an account of what she had done. This she called the *Foundations;* it is a volume of two hundred and fifty pages. There is another collection of eleven brief descriptions of her method of meditation, called *Relations* (narratives of her inward state), which she wrote from time to time for officials, and others who questioned her. She also composed two books of instruction for her nuns, *The Way of Perfection*, and *The Interior Castle*,—the names indicating that they treat of the path of union. Three volumes of her *Letters* have been preserved, though many others were lost, and there is also a volume of *Poems* (including Maxims). The richness of the available material is obvious—eight volumes, devoted to mystical experiences, which we have in modern translations and with scholarly editing.

Even a little reading of these books arouses reverent wonder in a student's mind; he begins to conjecture that the author of these letters, poems, and autobiographical accounts was something more than a saint. As he reads of the unusual and extraordinary degrees of interior consciousness to which this woman attained, it almost seems to him that St. Teresa might have been a chela of the great Lodge, who with splendid courage and perhaps at the risk of her own chelaship, went alone into the enemy's camp, and victoriously planted there, under the innocent name of a system of prayer, an ample handful of the precious seeds of Truth. What a piece of divine strategy! a portion of the terrain captured, a sector of the Roman Church turned into a hotbed for

the propagation of theosophical seedlings. Many withered and died without doubt, but some of them may have grown into saplings and oaks, and have become "pillars in the temple of our God."

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of St. Teresa's writings inasmuch as they contain the same instructions about prayer, continuous meditation and union, which were given to the world again in the nineteenth century through The Theosophical Society. Teachings that we study in *Light on the Path*, *The Voice of the Silence* and elsewhere, are translated in her books into a Roman Catholic vocabulary, and expressed in a form that could be understood by sixteenth century minds. The vocabulary and the form are not the chief thing; what is important is that the method of meditation she explains, had brought her to stand in the presence of her Master, so that her ear had heard his voice, and those who followed her could do the same.

She was born in 1515, and was thus a generation younger than Loyola and his friends. When she was suspected by other leaders of the Church, the Jesuits, and likewise the Dominicans, were generally her sympathetic advisers and defenders. Several of them were her confessors at different periods of her life, and appeared to understand her somewhat, as they encouraged her to continue her interior prayer, assuring her that she was divinely inspired and was not deluded by the devil. Her birth-place was the town of Avila, fifty-eight miles north-west of Madrid, in the old province of Castile. Avila was a small town (its population, at the end of the nineteenth century, was 13,000), but it was the seat of a bishop and contained a cathedral and once had a university. Within its mediæval walls (or nearby in the environs), were three convents for women, an Augustinian (40 nuns), a Carmelite, called "the Incarnation," dedicated in the year of St. Teresa's birth (180 nuns), and a Franciscan (number not given); while for men, there was a Dominican monastery which seems to have replaced an earlier Franciscan house, and, later, the Jesuits also made a centre there. Avila thus had the mediæval atmosphere of monasticism.

Both parents represented families of rank. Teresa's mother was her father's second wife, and besides her seven brothers and a sister, there were two half-brothers and a half-sister, children of the first wife. The two groups of children lived together harmoniously. When Teresa was twelve years old, her mother died (about 1528), and the half-sister, Maria, the eldest of them all, quite naturally took the mother's place in the supervision of the house and of the younger ones.

The parents gave their children a religious upbringing. Teresa's fervour was first kindled by the stories told in the family circle, and at the age of seven, with a brother for companion, she left home and passed through the town gate, on the way southward to Granada, to die, as she thought, a martyr among the Moors. Prescott says that Spanish families gained their noble rank through successful efforts against the Moorish conquerors, many of whom still lingered in the south of Spain after the general expulsion made by Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492. The vague terrors that American children

used to feel when Indians were mentioned, may suggest something of what Moors meant to the imagination of Spanish children. These two, Teresa and her brother, youthful aspirants to martyrdom, had scarcely passed through the mediæval gate of Avila, when they came face to face with an uncle on his horse, riding to town from the country. This uncle took them promptly home, and thus their dream of martyrdom ended.

The half-sister, Maria, married in 1531 and left Avila, necessitating some changes in the household, as Teresa, the elder of the two remaining daughters, was then only sixteen years old. The father solved his problem in a very natural manner by placing Teresa as a boarding pupil in the Augustinian convent of Avila, where she remained a year and a half, gradually growing to feel that she herself wished to become a nun. Her feeling deepened into conviction after she returned home and had to live again in association with people of worldly dispositions; but as her father opposed her desire, she talked frankly with another brother, whose secret she had guessed, and together, one morning at dawn, they left the paternal roof,—the brother going to the Dominican friars of Avila, while Teresa went to the Carmelite convent of the Incarnation just outside the old town wall. The apparent motive that led her to select the Carmelites was that at the Incarnation a friend of whom she was fond had already taken nun's vows. The Prioress received Teresa but sent immediate word to her father. The father went at once to the convent, apparently to lead Teresa back home; but, arriving there, he suddenly changed his mind and gave complete consent to her remaining as a novice. He may have recognized, at last, that his daughter's desire was more than a whim. In due time Teresa's dowry was made over to the convent. That convent of the Incarnation of Avila will need to be mentioned many times in this study; for the sake of brevity it will be called, as Teresa called it, simply, the Incarnation.

She entered there in 1533, and after a year as novice, took the vows in 1534, in her twentieth year. An illness that had for some time been troubling her became acute just then, and her father sent her for treatment to a physician of repute whose hospital was near the home of her half-sister, Maria. En route, Teresa and her friend stopped a night with an uncle, a devout old man, who gave her a little Franciscan *Primer of Prayer*. At the Incarnation she appears to have received little instruction in praying, and the *Primer* became a friend and was to be her companion and teacher during a long illness. She heeded its precepts, and in the days of acute pain, she learned to know some of the realities to which meditation opens the door. "I used to labour with all my might to imagine Jesus Christ, our God and our Lord, present within me. And this was the way I prayed. If I meditated on any mystery of life, I represented it to myself as within me." [2]

The physician to whom she had gone afforded no relief, and after a year of treatment, she returned to her father's home, apparently a hopeless sufferer,—

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[2] *Life*, p. 18.

her disease seemed a combination of tuberculosis and paralysis, with affections of heart and nerves. Death was approaching, friends said, and after four days of coma, she was pronounced dead. Her grave was dug in the Incarnation cemetery, and her actual interment was hindered only by the obstinacy of her father who would not believe it. He proved right, for the coma passed, and she lingered on to be taken back to the Incarnation, where for three years more, she continued in a miserable condition, unable to walk. Finally, she was cured, through special prayers to St. Joseph, she said; and henceforth she paid great devotion to him, giving his name to the first convent she built.

Illness and solitude had made her acquainted with the power of meditation and with the state of recollection; restored health threatened her with complete loss of both. At the convent there seemed to be as much freedom for visitors as there is in the average family of the world. Teresa had had some kind of a struggle against herself before she decided to become a nun, and when health succeeded her long illness, she followed the example of the other nuns and spent time frequently in social converse. How grave a fault she committed we can not know, for when she speaks of her own sins, one must be on guard not to take her too literally,—what the world would call a microscopic fault she would see as a mountain of evil. As her conscience gave her trouble over this matter of visitors, she attempted to lessen the disparity between her better and her lower self by an act of false humility—she omitted her daily meditation which had brought her some realization of the spiritual world. "I was ashamed to draw near unto God in an act of such special friendship as that of prayer. . . . It was the most fearful delusion into which Satan could plunge me—to give up prayer under pretence of humility. . . . I thought it would be better for me to live like the multitude—to say the prayers which I was bound to say, and that vocally; not to practise mental prayer [3] nor commune with God so much." [4] She even deceived her father (according to her own statement) as to her motive for omitting her meditation, telling him it was because she was still weak after her illness. Not long afterward her father died, and in talking with his spiritual adviser, she told him something of her inner condition and of the practice of meditation which she had abandoned for more than a whole year; he directed her to resume it at once, and she obeyed. She never forgave herself that deliberate abandonment of a spiritual exercise that had brought her to the Master's presence; and years later, when she was writing the *Life* and other books, she continually refers to it as a voluntary evil that burdened her with more guilt than hardened criminals carry. "I see clearly that it will give no one pleasure to see any thing so base; and certainly I wish those who may read this to have me in abhorrence, as a soul so obstinate and so ungrateful to Him who did so much for me. I passed nearly twenty years on this stormy sea, falling and rising, but rising to no

[3] She thus defines meditation or mental prayer: "It is nothing else, in my opinion, but being on terms of friendship with God, frequently conversing in secret with Him, who, we know, loves us."

[4] *Life*, p. 34.

good purpose, seeing that I went and fell again. . . . Though of mortal sins I was afraid, I was not so afraid of them as I ought to have been, because I did not avoid the perilous occasions of them. I may say that it was the most painful life that can be imagined, because I had no sweetness in God, and no pleasure in the world." [5] As always, we must guard against interpreting too literally what Teresa says of her sins and distractions. From the point of view of the average man, all the saints greatly exaggerate when they speak of their sins, and she is no exception.

The advice of a priest led her to resume daily meditation, but the social conversations were not discontinued, even though Christ Himself stood before her in person in reproof of her conduct. That event is the first inner experience which she describes, and these are her words, written in her *Life* twenty-six years after the event. "Our Lord was pleased to show me that these friendships were not good for me: to warn me, also, and in my blindness, which was so great, to give me light. Christ stood before me, stern and grave, giving me to understand what in my conduct was offensive to Him. I saw Him with the eyes of the soul more distinctly than I could have seen Him with the eyes of the body. The vision made so deep an impression upon me, that, though it is more than twenty-six years ago, I seem to see Him present even now." [6]

People who have not accepted a leader to the point of obeying him, repeatedly ask for "a sign" that will be irrefragable proof to them of his divine origin. The Jews were constantly asking such a "sign" of Christ, and he as constantly refused. Teresa's interpretation of that "sign" Christ gave to her, suggests reasons he may have had for refusing "signs" to others. "It did me much harm that I did not then know it was possible to see any thing otherwise than with the eyes of the body; so did Satan too, in that he helped me to think so: he made me understand it to be impossible, and suggested that I had imagined the vision—that it might be Satan himself—and other suppositions of that kind. For all this, the impression remained with me that the vision was from God, and not an imagination; but, as it was not to my liking, I forced myself to lie to myself; and as I did not dare to discuss the matter with anyone, and as great importunity was used, I went back to my former conversation." [7]

C. C. CLARK.

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[5] *Life*, p. 46. [6] *Life*, p. 37. [7] *Life*, p. 37.

(*To be continued*)

PERSY

MY son Persy and I keep house together.

Persy is a fine strapping boy, in fact, almost too strapping for a mere child of his age. He measures six feet one, in his stockings, and tips the scales at exactly two hundred pounds. He has auburn hair, a florid complexion, and a slight cast in his left eye, noticeable especially whenever he gets angry or excited. Also, he has a very resonant voice, not so very musical in quality, perhaps, but powerful, very powerful. And he likes to use it. In fact, he enjoys making almost any kind of a noise; this is one of his most pronounced characteristics. When he is not talking, singing or yelling for something he wants, he is likely to be playing on any one of several musical instruments, which I have given him from time to time. He has a trumpet, a drum, cymbals, a saxophone and one or two more, on which he performs, by turns, according to his moods.

For Persy certainly is moody; moody and temperamental. At times he is hilariously pleased with himself, and will blow his trumpet and beat his drum, incessantly. This is almost sure to be the case if one is so injudicious as to praise him for something. At other times he is glum, discontented, even sullen; often full of self pity; and then he moans and groans and even weeps audibly. This is what happens when he cannot have what he wants, or when he is criticized.

Persy has a number of favourite songs, which he sings over and over again. Everyone else becomes very weary of hearing these songs, but to Persy they seem an endless source of satisfaction. Among those which he sings loudest and most frequently are: "See, the conquering hero comes," "How dry I am," "There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight," and "Can't you see I'm lonely?"

I fear Persy is very selfish. This fact, of course, is indicated in many ways, but as an example I will mention one habit of his, which I find particularly trying. Our house has a large bay-window, which faces the street, and is the most prominent window in the whole house. Sitting in it, one can see all the passers-by, and also be seen by them. Persy has practically pre-empted this window as his own. His huge bulk fills the window seat, and leaves no room at all for me, unless I stand up behind him and look over his shoulder. As a result, Persy is known by sight, if not by sound, to most of the people of our town, while in all probability, few of them have ever seen me, or know that I exist. For I seldom go out.

We have a neighbour named Mr. Truth. This gentleman is a person of distinction, of true nobility. He and all his family are extremely worth while, and I would greatly like to know them intimately. They seem very friendly toward me. But, unfortunately Persy has very little use for the family of

Truth. He says they "give him a pain," and that, I believe, is because he knows they do not approve of his erratic manners. Persy hates and fears discipline of any kind. He has heard that Mr. Truth, though most generous and kind, is a strict disciplinarian. That settles him for Persy. If Persy sees any of the little Truths approaching our house, he is likely to make such a noise that they are driven away; or, if they come so far as to knock at the door, he immediately makes a clatter so that I shall not hear them, and thus fail to let them in. Occasionally it has even happened that one or two of the Truths have succeeded in entering our house, but before I had any opportunity for conversation with them, Persy immediately raised such a hubbub that they retreated hastily. Persy was hilarious, but their departure made me sad, as it seemed a misfortune and disgrace.

Probably I have said enough to show you that in Persy I have a real problem, and one with which hitherto I have coped unsuccessfully. But now, at least, I have lost some of my early illusions about him, and, in a measure, I face the facts of the case. Persy, or rather Personality, for that is his real name, must be reduced to his proper position in my house, and that as soon as possible. Otherwise life will not be worth living for me. I am telling you about it because I am going to start disciplining him to-day, immediately. In fact, the battle is on.

Congratulate yourself that you do not have a child like Persy.

C. M. S.

To be plunged in matter (i.e. to be incarnated) is to descend into Hades, and there fall asleep.—PLOTINUS.

FORGOTTEN COMMONPLACES OF EDUCATION

A COMMONPLACE to students of theosophy, but one which is continually being forgotten in practice, is that each child, as each man, has a higher and a lower nature, or, as it is usually and better put, *is* a higher and *has* a lower nature. The age-old simile pictures the body and all its powers as the horses of the chariot, and the real man, the Will within us, as the charioteer who is either to rule the horses or to be run away with by them. The purpose of education is to train the horses to be driven, and the driver to drive where he wishes to go, and not where his horses may want to take him. Most of the mistakes of education come from failure to distinguish between horses and driver. One hears so often of a parent's desire to preserve the "individuality" of the child, and of the fear lest discipline should crush it. It is argued that nothing must be done to restrain the child; its every whim must have full play in order that the spark of genius within may not be crushed into the dullness of routine.

No one will insist more strongly than members of The Theosophical Society on the value of true individuality and the necessity for preserving it. The only question is how this can best be done.

A study of the old simile of the rider and his horse may throw a good deal of light on the principles involved. Anyone who has ever ridden to hounds knows that there are two classes of riders, those who "ride their own line," who choose for themselves the way that they think is best, and follow it irrespective of how others go, and those who follow the crowd, waiting their turn to get through the gates which someone else has opened. The rider who cannot trust his mount must often, against his desire, take the second course, for if he tries to ride his own line on an unreliable hunter he will be very likely to come to grief. To just the extent to which the horse insists on "expressing his individuality," by untrustworthiness and disobedience, the rider is unable to express his own. It is exactly the same thing with a man. True originality is of the soul. The personality, the lower nature, is pretty much the same with everybody. We all have, in varying degrees, the same desires, passions, appetites. They are all as old as the hills, and the child that indulges them is neither expressing himself nor being original.

On the other hand, each soul is original and has its own note to strike in the orchestra of the universe, which no other can supply. The problem of life is to give expression to the soul, which is only another way of saying, to the deepest and highest ideal that each one of us has. On a lower plane, the ideal of the musician is to give the closest expression that he can to the soul of music as he sees or feels it. Obviously his ability to do this is in exact proportion to his

vision or feeling, and to his control of his instrument. The only way in which the soul of a man can express itself is through its instrument, the personality of that man. When the personality is tough, unyielding and disobedient, insisting on its own self-will, the difficulty of the soul's task must be correspondingly increased. A sculptor can mould clay to the image of beauty he wishes to portray, but he cannot mould brick. It does not do to let the personality harden, and there is nothing more hardening than self-will and self-indulgence. Calling them "self-expression," or "individuality," does not change their effect.

Napoleon, an expert horseman, insisted that the horses intended for his use should be trained to the most perfect obedience, so that, high mettled though they were, pistols could be fired off in their ears without their moving a muscle. He could not afford, in the crisis of a battle, to have an instant's attention diverted from his plan of action to the control of his mount. Each soul has its own plan of campaign, its own purpose to accomplish. The trouble with most of us is that so large a part of our energy and attention has to be given to the control of the powers of our personalities, our tempers, our chattering minds, our vanity and feelings, our sloth and indolence. Napoleon trying to fight Austerlitz from the back of a bucking broncho would be a fair analogy.

In one aspect, therefore, the duty of the parent is that of Napoleon's horse trainer, to teach the horse, the personality, complete obedience to the will of its future rider, the soul, and to make it as perfect an instrument as possible; further, to arouse the rider, to teach him to know his mount and how to control it. The first step, in training either, is to realize that the horse is a horse and the rider a rider, and that the two are not identical; nor do they respond to the same methods of instruction.

It is in that fact that we find the reconciliation of apparently opposite methods of training children. The lower nature responds to fear and to force, as the higher nature responds to justice and to love. Both must be appealed to in the ways that they respectively understand. The lower must be made afraid of disobedience; and the way to make it afraid is to make it suffer when it disobeys. The purpose of the whipping—if, as is often quickest and most effective, it be a whipping—is to bring the rebellious personality back under the control of its rider, the soul, which wants it to obey. No child should ever be punished for any other reason.

There is no greater or more common mistake than to punish a child because of the effect of what it has done. Suppose a child has been told never to touch a certain valuable vase. It puts its hand as near as it dares, and looks to see what the parent is going to do about it, the spirit of disobedience manifest in every look. That child's soul will be grateful for an instant, sharp whipping. (This is the explanation of a fact that has puzzled many parents,—why it is that sullen, rebellious unhappiness may be changed quickly by a whipping to gladness and gratitude.) On the other hand, suppose that nothing has been said about the vase, and the child, taking it up perhaps to admire its beauty, breaks a priceless heirloom. Obviously, there is no reason to blame it even by a sharp word, and to do so would be unjust. It is the spirit, the motive, that

has actuated the child that ought to govern our feeling toward it, not the result of the child's actions. If we make the spirit right, the results will take care of themselves. To punish a child for some childish breakage of one of our treasured possessions, or for unintentionally frightening us by a dangerous act that we did not have imagination enough to foresee and forbid, is pure self-indulgence on the parent's part, and is sure to do harm. Most children have a keen sense of justice which should never be outraged. Conversely, it is far more important to punish a wrong spirit than a wrong act. It is a mistake to wait for outer evidence that would enable us to defend our action in a court of law. Nor is it necessary to give reasons. The child knows.

As the personality responds to fear the soul responds to love. There is no use training the horse perfectly if we leave the rider fast asleep. The soul must be aroused and trained to ride; must be brought to self-consciousness and to the realization of why it came to incarnation. "Right self-identification" cannot be begun too early. Many a child can be ruined by being told it is "a bad child." It believes it, and acts accordingly,—an obvious result which one would think might be foreseen more often than it is. Surprise that a good child permits itself to act in so naughty a manner—perhaps necessitating severe punishment—is a more effective method, and tends to preserve the right self-identification of the child, keeping it from identifying itself with the naughtiness, which is, in truth, no part of itself or of its real desire.

The soul responds to love, and love should of course be the motive for the child's obedience. The lower nature should be afraid to disobey, and the higher should love to obey, and should implicitly trust the orders of the parent. Naturally, all parents desire love and trust, but the only way to be trusted is to be trustworthy. When orders are given from caprice, from a habit of saying "No," or from any reason other than obedience to principle on the parent's part,—when, in short, there is no obedience in the order, none reaches the child, and accordingly there is none for him to give back. When a child obeys such orders, it is as if he drew on an accumulated store ot obedience from within himself, a store that obviously cannot be expected to last indefinitely. On the other hand, when the parent is himself giving his directions in obedience to something higher than himself, the obedience flows through him to the child and the child gives it back easily and naturally. Children feel instinctively the wisdom and justice of such orders, and each one, obeyed, increases their store both of obedience and of trust.

It is, however, often a serious mistake to endeavour to explain the reasons for an order, particularly before the order has been obeyed. When that is done, the child's mind naturally begins to debate the wisdom of the order instead of thinking only of obeying it. The better its mind, the more likely it is to see the other side—that, in fact, is one of the functions of the mind, to see and present for consideration both sides of any question. Seeing the other side, the child naturally speaks of it, and the result is argument instead of obedience. This error is one into which the most conscientious parents are the most likely to fall, but their good intentions, unfortunately, do not change

the effect, which is often little short of disastrous. Children, particularly those with initiative and good minds of their own, may be brought by it to a state bordering on continual rebellion against their parents. The place above all others where obedience is best understood is the army. Fancy an army in which the officers explained the reasons for their orders to the privates! Russia once tried that, with results sufficiently well known.

Parents fall into this mistake through a desire that their children should "understand the reason why," or through an idea that "co-operation is better than blind obedience." We have already considered the need for obedience and its purpose,—to train the personality to obey the soul, "blindly" and without question, as a horse should obey its rider. During childhood the parent represents the soul of the child, or should do so. The function of the mind at any age is to carry out the orders of the soul, not to question them. The attempt to solve a moral question with the mind, leads to endless confusion. The mind—lower manas—is by nature a sophist, and can, for instance, easily prove that unselfishness is only a form of selfishness. It can—and does—supply us with a thousand excellent reasons for doing what we want to do, and for not doing what we do not want, but which we know in our hearts we ought to do. Moral problems are solved by the moral sense, a perceiving faculty of the soul, which is quite independent of, and above the mind. With "grown-ups," the obedience is due to the moral sense; with children, it is due to the parent. "Live the life, and ye shall know the doctrine." We gain light by obeying the highest light that we can see, not by debating about it. It is the same with children. We can talk endlessly of the advantages of, let us say, order and neatness, without effect. The only way to give a child a love of neatness is to insist on its being neat. With obedience to the rules of neatness will come love of it. "The obedience of to-day is the desire of to-morrow."

J. F. B. M.

Lord Beaconsfield said, The greatest tragedies of his life had been things that never happened. Carlyle said, That the reason why the past appeared to be beautiful in retrospect, was, that the element of fear was absent from it.

ELEMENTS AND ATOMS

SCIENCE has declared, for many years, that the elements—lead, gold, mercury, oxygen, chlorine, and so on—are all made up of atoms of matter. The phenomenal discoveries made by scientists of the present day tell us more about those atoms than the previous generation ever hoped to learn. Perhaps the simplest way of marking this advance in knowledge about the unseen atom, is to list a few questions concerning it. Some of these obvious questions physicists and chemists feel that they can now answer with an approach to certitude. Others they may hope that experiments already initiated will determine. The point, however, is that all are questions which they would now be prepared to entertain, while forty years ago no one, except a profound student of the age-old teachings given out by the Masters in certain theosophical books, would have considered them seriously.

What are the atoms made of? What do they look like? How does an atom of hydrogen differ from an atom of uranium? What holds the atom together? What holds it apart? Is an atom at rest in itself, or is it in rapid motion as to its own centre? May an atom be pricked like a toy balloon, and if so what is there left? Is everything atomic in its structure? The electric wire is atomic; is electricity atomic? Are light, heat, magnetism, and radio waves atomic? Is the æther atomic? Is consciousness atomic? Are honour, courage, obedience atomic? Is God atomic? Are atoms eternal? Is the law of the atom fixed and rigid, or does it provide for endless evolution of the atom? Are the atoms of helium in the sun exactly like the atoms of helium in our earth's atmosphere? Do atoms make a noise or are they silent? If they are in rapid motion on their own centres, what lubricates the centres? Are there vacant spaces in an atom? If so, is that space atomic? Do atoms interpenetrate each other? Are atoms elastic and compressible? If all atoms are made of electrons and protons, are all electrons and protons alike, and what are they made of? An electron is said to be a charge of negative electricity; what does that charge centre about? A proton is said to be a positive unit charge of electricity; what maintains it as a unit charge?

Six books are enough to indicate, in outline at least, what is known about the atom—three by scientists, and three in which is recorded much that science has yet to discover on its own ground—*The Secret Doctrine*, *Isis Unveiled*, *Five Years of Theosophy*, Soddy's *Interpretation of Radium*, Rutherford's 1923 *Address Before the British Association of Science*, Andrade's *Structure of the Atom*.

What makes the ink on this page black? Carbon, a chemical element. Turn to page 214 of Soddy, or to page 209 of Andrade which is the later and better book, for the Periodic Table of the Elements. This table is an arrangement of the 87 known and the 5 undiscovered elements in the order of their atomic values. Just as the digits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc., are arranged according to their

unit values, so it is with this table of the elements which is Mendeléeff's great contribution to science. He saw that the elements bore strange and interesting relationships to each other, and he arranged them in such a way as to permit those correspondences to be studied. In the table, the elements are arranged by their atomic weights, and are numbered in rotation, beginning with hydrogen, No. 1, atomic weight 1.008, and ending with uranium, No. 92, atomic weight 238.18. Carbon is No. 6, atomic weight 12. It is interesting to note that Mendeléeff worked by the old occult method of correspondences, and that Professor Bohr, whose brilliant corroboration of the sequence of elements in the table is based on dynamical principles induced from spectral phenomena, has made this law of correspondence the foundation of his system.

PERIODIC TABLE OF THE CHEMICAL ELEMENTS, 1920.

	Group O	Group I	Group II	Group III	Group IV	Group V	Group VI	Group VII	Group VIII		
	1 Hydrogen 1.008	2 Helium He 3.99	3 Lithium Li. 6.94	4 Beryllium Be. 9.1	5 Boron. B. 11.0	6 Carbon C. 12.00	7 Nitrogen N. 14.01	8 Oxygen O. 16.00	9 Fluorine F. 19.0		
		10 Neon Ne. 20.2	11 Sodium Na. 23.00	12 Magnesium Mg. 24.32	13 Aluminium Al. 27.1	14 Silicon Si. 28 3	15 Phosphorus P. 31.04	16 Sulphur S. 32.07	17 Chlorine Cl. 35.46		
A		18 Argon A. 39.88	19 Potassium K. 39.10	20 Calcium Ca. 40.07	21 Scandium Sc. 44.1	22 Titanium Ti. 48.1	23 Vanadium V. 51.0	24 Chromium Cr. 52.0	25 Manganese Mn. 54.93	26 Iron Fe. 55.84	27 Cobalt Co. 58.97	28 Nickel Ni. 58.68
B			29 Copper Cu. 63.57	30 Zinc Zn. 65.37	31 Gallium Ga. 69.9	32 Germanium Ge. 72.5	33 Arsenic As. 74.96	34 Selenium Se. 79.2	35 Bromine Br. 79.92		
A	36 Krypton Kr. 82.92	37 Rubidium Rb. 85.45	38 Strontium Sr. 87.63	39 Yttrium Yt. 89.0	40 Zirconium Zr. 90.6	41 Niobium Nb. 93.5	42 Molybdenum Mo. 96.0	43 ———	44 Ruthenium Ru. 101.7	45 Rhodium Rh. 102.9	46 Palladium Pd. 106.7
B		47 Silver Ag. 107.88	48 Cadmium Cd. 112.40	49 Indium In. 114.8	50 Tin Sn. 119.0	51 Antimony Sb. 120.2	52 Tellurium Te. 127.5	53 Iodine I. 126.92			
A	54 Xenon Xe. 130.2	55 Caesium Cs. 132.81	56 Barium Ba. 137.37	57 Lanthanum La. 139.0	58 Cerium Ce. 140.25	59 Praseodymium Pr. 140.6	60 Neodymium Nd. 144.3	61 ———	62 Samarium Sa. 150.4		
				63 Europium Eu. 152.0	64 Gadolinium Gd. 157.3	65 Terbium Tb. 159.2	66 Dysprosium Dy. 162.5	67 Holmium 163.5	68 Erbium Er. 167.7		
				69 Thulium Tm. 168.5	70 Ytterbium Yb. 172.0	71 Lutecium Lu. 174.0	72 ———	73 Tantalum Ta. 181.5	74 Tungsten W. 184.0	75 ———	76 Osmium Os. 190.9	77 Iridium Ir. 193.1	78 Platinum Pt. 195.2
B		79 Gold Au. 197.2	80 Mercury Hg. 200.6	81 Thallium Tl. 204.0	82 Lead Pb. 207.20	83 Bismuth Bi. 208.0	84 Polonium (210)	85 ———			
	86 Radium Emanation (222)	87 ———	88 Radium Ra. 226.0	89 Actinium	90 Thorium Th. 232.12	91 Uranium X_2 (Brevium)	92 Uranium U. 238.18				

Only the six spaces marked ——— are vacant places

The figures above the name of the element are the atomic numbers, and those below the atomic weights.

No. 72, Hafnium, has now been discovered, leaving only five vacant spaces.

When *Isis* was published 47 years ago, the elements had exactly the same profound significance that they have to-day, and innumerable clews were given there which would lead to an understanding of the mystery. The clews remain in *Isis*. More clews were given in the *Secret Doctrine*, with labels tied to some of them, but most of us did not have the interest or the energy to follow them up. To-day, this subject has become specially easy for us to study, because the whole scientific world is ablaze with the light of new discoveries which have revolutionized earlier conceptions about the constitution of matter. Now we have the chance to ride in on the flood tide of interest and enthusiasm created by the splendid work of Rutherford, Bohr, Aston, Moseley, J. J. Thomson, Lodge, Lenard, Crookes, Becquerel, Roentgen, Mme. Curie, Prout, Planck, Wilson, Langmuir, and a hundred more who have added their labour and their genius to the work of illustrious predecessors.

If we knew the real elements of matter in their pure state, and could arrange

them in a table to show their real relationships, such a table would present, would it not, one view of the picture which was in the mind of God when he created the manifested universe? The way to knowledge of the laws of life, the conditions required, the assistance given by those who have attained, is the theme of our occult literature since the old-time before the earliest *Upanishad* was written. It is in the spirit of that teaching, and not with the wish to discover some new chemical compound which the Germans of to-morrow would use against humanity, that one would seek out the secret of the elements.

The table shows the comparative weight or mass of the atom of the different elements. This weight or mass is almost wholly the property of the nucleus of the atom. There is no element having an atom of the exact value of 1, as compared with the mass of other atoms. Hydrogen, whose atomic weight is 1.008, comes nearest to unity and is commonly regarded as the unit, in spite of its troublesome decimal, although some chemists prefer to use oxygen as the unit because its atom weighs an even 16.

There were 26 blank spaces in this periodic table when Mendeléeff, the great Russian chemist, published it in 1871, and many of his brilliant predictions regarding the characteristics of those undiscovered substances have been marvellously fulfilled. To-day there are only 5 vacant spaces, but most important of the 21 new elements was Mme. Curie's Radium, No. 88, because it gave to the scientific world not only an example of highly radiant matter, but also an element whose atom was visibly and violently disintegrating. This discovery of Radium opened the way to all of our present knowledge of the interior of the atom and the constitution of matter.

Glancing at the table, the most noticeable fact is that hydrogen stands outside of all the groups. Then one naturally wonders why the first of the nine vertical groups is numbered 0. These vertical groups are family groups, since they include elements having similar chemical properties. There is the strongest of family resemblances between the five inert gases of the Zero group, since none of them will enter into combination with any other element. The whole group is found in the atmosphere, in mechanical mixture with the nitrogen and oxygen of the air and with each other, but no chemical compounds are formed. This group has no chemical properties, and, therefore, its group Number is 0.

Compare the first two elements in group 1—Lithium, No. 3, with Sodium, No. 11—remembering that their atomic numbers are real things because they represent the quality of their atoms. Both of these elements are alkaline metals, both are electro-positive, both have a valency of 1. In the atomic table, they are separated by seven other elements, that is, they are an octave apart. The next member of Group I is Potassium, No. 19, one octave beyond Sodium, No. 11. Like all of the members of Group 1, Potassium is said to have a valency of 1. This means, according to current theories of the structure of the atom, that each element in this group has a single electron which it is ready to share in union with any other congenial atom which is seeking a single electron.

These octaves in the first section of the list of elements are so noticeable

that it is not strange that attention was called to their periodicity very soon after the first practical table of the atomic weights was published by the Swedish chemist Berzelius in 1815. Prout's Hypothesis, 1815, was the first of a long line of inquiries into the various relationships between the elements. Mendeléeff's arrangement is accepted as the standard expression of the periodic law, but the spiral diagram, which Prof. William Crookes gave in his lecture before the British Association in 1886, is, perhaps, most provocative of thought for those who seek in all things traces of the one great Law, behind and above all that is manifest.

Professor Soddy, in *The Interpretation of Radium*, brings the variations in the periodic table almost within the understanding of us all: "We may suppose that, when the number of electrons in the outer ring [of an atom] exceeds a certain limit, which in the first part of the periodic table is seven, a complete new inner ring of eight electrons is formed. The chemical properties, however, depend only on the outermost ring directly, and the inner rings exert a subordinate effect. The valency of such an element and its general chemical nature resembles, therefore, the eighth preceding element. This holds in the early part of the periodic table. At the 22nd element, titanium, a new and more complicated dual periodicity commences, in which the number of elements separating the consecutive members of one family is eighteen instead of eight. A new group of three closely allied elements, the so-called VIIIth Group, now appears in the middle of the period, where previously an argon element would appear, and the next seven elements have a partial analogy to the seven preceding the VIIIth Group. The easiest way of regarding the matter is to suppose that ten metallic elements, indicated in the Table between } { are interpolated into the old short periods.

"At the 57th element, lanthanum, the law suddenly and completely breaks down. A group of seventeen elements . . . of which two [now one] remain to be discovered, is interpolated into the series at this point. They all resemble one another and lanthanum with such extreme closeness that their separation and identification is one of the most laborious and difficult tasks that the chemist can undertake. At tantalum, the 73rd element, the series begins again almost as if it had not been interrupted, and continues normally to the end."

The structure of an atom, as now pictured by scientists, is a planetary system in miniature. At the centre is a nucleus composed of a very small and closely held group of positive particles called Protons, separated from each other by negative particles called Electrons. This central group or nucleus always contains at least one more proton than it has electrons. It is always positive. Although in some elements the nucleus is smaller than a single electron in one of the outer rings, the nucleus contains most of the mass of the atom, most of the energy of the atom, and acts as the sun of that tiny solar system. Around the central nucleus, revolve electrons in concentric rings. Quoting John Mills' *Within the Atom:* "In the nucleus there is always an excess of protons and the number by which this excess is specified is known

as the atomic number. The largest known atomic number is 92. On the basis of atomic numbers, therefore, a classification may be established of 92 types of atomic systems. These types may be cross-classified on the basis of valence. As we proceed from one type of atomic system to that of the next atomic number there is a change of one in the number of excess protons in the nucleus, and a corresponding change of one in the number of external electrons. For example, let us enter our system of classification by atomic numbers at the eleventh type, which is that of the sodium atom. We must picture this atomic system with eleven excess protons in the nucleus and eleven external electrons, the actual configuration of which is still problematical. Despite the fact that there is a quantitative balance between the protons and the electrons, of complementary properties, there is a lack of satisfaction in the portion of the system comprised by the external electrons."

A single glance at the periodic table, then, tells us that silver is No. 47, which means that it has 47 excess protons in the nucleus, and 47 electrons outside the nucleus and revolving about it. We find that silver belongs in Group I, therefore we know that silver, like gold 79, copper 29, sodium 11, and all the other members of Group I, has a single electron in its outer ring. Seven is often miscalled the perfect number, but it does not seem to be a satisfied number. Perhaps that is one reason for its being called perfect. In any case, seven seems to be the normal number of electrons for a simple outer ring. The elements in Group I are trying to be normal, and the obvious thing for any element in Group I to do, would be to combine with some element in Group VII, because all of the elements in Group VII have 7 electrons in their outer ring but are still looking for one more electron to satisfy their vanity or their ambition. What are the elements in Group VII? Chlorine, bromine, iodine, etc. We know what happens when chlorine has an opportunity to combine with one of the elements in Group I, because we know sodium chloride (table salt), silver chloride, gold chloride, etc.

Changes in the outer rings of its electrons do not transform the atom of one element into an atom of some other element. Sodium, for example, seems to be an element of simple structure, with 11 excess protons in the nucleus, and 11 external electrons. Of these 11 external electrons, 2 form the first ring outside the nucleus; then comes a satisfied ring of 8 electrons; outside of this satisfied ring, revolves the single electron of the outer ring typical of all the elements in Group 1. Suppose some alpha particle, shot off from the nucleus of an atom of radium and passing at one-half the speed of light, should knock off into space that single, outer electron of sodium! The accident would not change the sodium into cobalt or nickel or some other element which has 8 electrons in its outer ring. On the contrary, that particular atom of sodium would only be waiting its opportunity to grasp the first electron which came near, either seizing a lone electron wandering through space on its own account, or robbing one of its neighbours of one electron from an outer ring. The nucleus determines the character of an atom, and no change outside the nucleus can affect the atom except temporarily. One may imagine a series of accidents which

might rob the sodium atom of all its 11 external electrons, but, unless the nucleus were injured, it would be only a matter of time and opportunity before that nucleus would have captured another set of 11 external electrons.

It was the study of accidents to atoms, and a brilliant series of inductive and deductive conclusions drawn from that study, which enabled Sir Ernest Rutherford to make a convincing picture of the nuclear atom, and its general structure so like that of a miniature solar system. Radium furnished the projectiles for the series of accidents which Rutherford produced and studied. We shall recall that radium is constantly dissipating its substance and its energy because its nucleus is breaking down. From the nucleus of an atom of radium, a particle of the nucleus itself is driven off, from time to time, with an explosive release of energy which hurls that bit of nuclear material straight off into space. As compared with the penetrating force of this dense nuclear material shot off from radium, the most powerful rifle bullet would have the effect of a soap-bubble wafted by a gentle zephyr. The nuclear bits shot off from radium are called alpha particles, and they go straight through everything in their path at a speed of 10,000 miles a second.

By an ingenious device, C. T. R. Wilson found the means for photographing the track which these particles make while flying through a moist gas. From a hill-top, looking down on the still surface of a pond, one can often see the tiny wake left by a muskrat swimming across the pond. From that distance, the muskrat is wholly invisible, but the wake on the surface of the water shows every twist and turn that he makes. In a similar way, Wilson showed that the wake left by alpha particles was usually a straight line, but occasionally one of them struck something which turned it off at an angle, or even drove it back in the direction from which it came. Nothing but a bull's-eye hit on the nucleus of an atom can turn one of these flying particles aside. Collisions of that type were produced under varying conditions, using atoms of different elements as the targets, the paths of the projectiles being compared.

From a series of photographs of the wake left by an invisible swimmer, would you be prepared to draw a picture of the swimmer, and also to determine the temperature and circulation of his blood? Rutherford's task was as difficult as the imagination can conceive. Andrade makes an amusing comparison: "The physicist attempting to construct an atomic model from considerations of spectral data has been compared to a man who, never having seen a musical instrument, should essay to construct a model of a piano by listening to the sounds made by it when thrown downstairs."

Behind and within the visible universe moves the invisible universe. Pass through the centre of the nucleus of a material atom, and, perhaps, we should find ourselves within an atom of finer substance and greater forces. Were we able to endure the piercing pressure at the centre of that freer and more powerful atom, we might pass through and enter a still higher form, where the infinitely small merges into the infinitely great, where substance is radiant, forces etheric, and where consciousness has become individual because it has become universal.

ALAN DOUGLAS.

WORRY

SOME words in common use to-day have travelled a long way in meaning from their original connotation. It is often true, however, that a root derivation, far from revealing merely the antiquarian value of a word, tends rather to indicate some simple and deep-seated human experience which underlies the almost habitual surface consideration of ordinary speech. At a glance we see how a present meaning grew from the old one by an extension to a wider range of similar experiences—perhaps inner rather than outer,—until the primary significance became obscured or was forgotten.

Such a word is the familiar term "worry." By current definition it means—what is familiar to all of us, not only in sense but in experience,—"to express undue care and anxiety; to manifest disquietude and pain"; to "borrow trouble"; *i.e.* a "state of undue solicitude." But the root derivation gives the full force of the experience, and takes us a plane deeper:—the old Dutch *worgen* or *wurgen*, to strangle or choke. And that is exactly what worry does to the higher powers of the spirit of man—strangles and chokes them. Worry exerts a constrictive force, that inhibits or prevents the flow of spiritual refreshment into the mind and heart. As a result, the person most in need of spiritual refreshment, and at just the moment when that refreshment is required, cuts himself off.

Most people worry; and there are various kinds springing from divers causes. Some enjoy worries, and many manufacture them. It is to these a pleasing form of self-indulgence, evoking attention or consideration or pity from others, and giving to the minor affairs and concerns of life a fictitious importance. Needless to say the light of self-understanding has little opportunity to enter into dispositions so perverse, and real help is thoroughly unwelcome as it would immediately destroy the illusion. Nor are people wholeheartedly serving any cause who create difficulties and dangers, discover hidden evils, and imagine a host of possible misfortunes; rather they are seeking self in one of its least attractive forms,—self-pity. Such worries are manifestly artificial, and their exaggeration sometimes comes from stings of conscience —the uneasiness and disquietude that begins to discern what may follow the negligent performance of duties, and a sudden fear lest there be responsibility for evil consequences. So there springs up an unregulated desire to impress others with a real concern where there had actually been a more or less complete indifference.

All worries, however, are by no means conjured up to please an idle or a troubled selfishness. Many people are oppressed by them, but can not shake them off. Women are as a rule more out-spoken about their worries than men; and they it is who seem more frequently to discover numerous—nay, innumerable occasions for demonstrating both their ingenuity and their perspicacity

in uncovering and maintaining them. Men worry more deeply, and usually over graver matters; and often reveal a surprising lack of courage and of faith.

In theosophic terms, what is worry? What its cause and cure?

Obviously, worry can not be an expression of Buddhi—the spiritual will; nor of Higher Manas—that "intuition with certainty" and royal knowledge of seers and adepts. It is apparently, not so much a thing in itself, as the resultant of a twofold negative condition—*i.e.*, the absence of faith, and the absence of courage. Remove the negative condition, devote one's interest to a cause, plunge fearlessly and with set purpose into the conflict, and the fogs and maya of worry dissipate into nothingness. A man steeped in work, a soldier on the battlefield, has no time for worry. Worry comes in the silent night watches, or in hours when the will is idle. Only the man whose determination is set unswervingly on the desired goal is capable of that "higher carelessness," which is the opposite of worry, and the hall-mark of the true disciple.

To be without a living faith, and either conscious or instinctive courage, leaves a man the prey to unregulated imagination, and a victim of his personal desires. He can not see life truly. Every event and circumstance appears coloured by desires, which express themselves in fancies, in hopes and fears,—in what he wants to have happen, or does not want to have happen. Worry is, therefore, the perversion of Buddhi, a form of Kama joined to lower-Manas. The Kama, or self-will, is often battling against Karma, against the consequences, the complications and dangers created by its own past acts; and the friction strikes off sparks of worry. Lower-Manas, controlled by Kama, sees life, therefore, only in terms of personal desire—its fulfilment or frustration. To worry is to give more or less free reign to the hopes and fears, the arguments and debates, of such a lower Kama-Manasic consciousness, and is to strangle, or shut out, the soul.

To worry, then, is to lack a living faith—faith in what Mr. Judge calls the "Good Law"—and is to think and plan and desire from the personal centre.

So many people seem to adopt the attitude that unless *they* plan and scheme and devise, and unless *they* carry out a pre-determined course to a successful issue, the world will be the poorer, and their own life a failure. But Karma is misconceived if it be thought to operate only *after* the event,—a mere weighing and balancing machine. Karma, and the great Lords of Karma, have long since laid their far-reaching and skilful plans, and ceaselessly work, not only adjusting, but preparing each life in all its details. Therefore, the man of living faith does not seek in life the fulfilment of his own designs,—has learned indeed the fallibility and inadequacy of these,—but rather seeks to find the Will of Karma and the Master, and to serve that. In his own manifold and forever changing wills and desires, he can never rest secure; but in the Divine Will he may indeed confide, serenely confident that life holds no richer blessing than the fulfilment of the Master's Will. "E la sua volontate è nostra pace."

Every manifestation of worry is negative, is to admit and to entertain dark clouds of doubt, to belittle the Master's wisdom and power, to pervert the right use of the imagination. Worry is often a back-handed admission by the

lower congeries of elementals that they are weak and short-lived, when they wish that they were strong and enduring,— and is their protest against that sense of impotence. A man worries when he seeks results—and these either for himself or for another; it is all one. It is a pathetic misunderstanding of love and affection that they drive so many to worry about the health, the safety, even the spiritual progress of the one beloved. Into such "undue solicitude" there unquestionably enters an element of selfishness. No man can truly love whose consciousness is so far enmeshed in the purely personal centre, and who still limits his vision of what is desirable to the ephemeral achievements or comforts or well-being of an earthly life.

Worry must be given up, or conquered, by the disciple. And the way to undermine the life and force of any worry is first to face it fearlessly, and then by act of will to withdraw the heart from its *attachment* to some immediate goal. Each worry has its objective—a hidden something that it wants, behind the outer things it fears. Lay bare this desire; study it, and seek always for the snake of self in it, however fair-seeming on the surface, because worry is proof positive of that dire presence. Are you worrying lest your accomplishment of some important duty may be imperfect? Then see to it that, mixed with the good, your hidden desire be not for praise,—be it solely the Master's praise,—or that *you* may succeed, rather than that the Master's Work and Will be done. Are you worrying lest a child fall into some bodily or spiritual harm, or that he may succumb to some besetting temptation? Remember that "People are like circumstances. You cannot make them over. Accept them. The only way you can hope to influence them is by what you are. Accept that also." . . . "The man who rushes back to the world is not to be grieved over. He doubtless gained all he could while in our ranks, and now needs different training. Neither is he to be mourned who is snatched up in a psychic whirlwind and carried off before our eyes. Some one is carefully directing his course, we may be sure, and he will receive just the schooling he needs." In the implications of that last sentence lies so often the touch-stone of our worry:—faith tells us that Karma directs his course, but *we want also to do the directing*, we have our own ideas and our own intense desires as to how it should be done. Yet who are we to shape a life and its development in terms of our vision and our desires? In very truth these more often blind our eyes to the real needs of our child; and we are, by more than half, seeking to force our will against the stone wall of fact and Karma, and so we beat ourselves like moths against the very light of truth.

You worry because you do not really love your child—or rather because you love your child as yet imperfectly. You may, and must, have an intense desire that good may come to him, but the element of worry enters where that desire is not an expression of the Divine Will, but is tinged with self. Detach yourself from that in you which clings to your own preconceived plans, which sees no alternatives but those within your very limited understanding of all the factors involved, which desires from purely human motives and instincts, and you will no longer worry. Your heart may still ache—events may even justify

your foreboding of evil—but there will no longer be the friction, the irritation, the unregulated agitation of worriment. Christ did not worry in the Garden of Gethsemane, nor when Peter professed so loudly and so emptily his loyalty and devotion.

Worry is petty. Worry is a sign of weakness. Worry is a signal of the presence of self. Let us have done with worry,—by rising above it, by throwing heart and soul into action—be it outer work or inner intense prayer—but always through the assertion of the Divine power and beneficence, and by advancing fearlessly (with the carelessness of enthusiasm, with the steadiness of the trained and skilful workman), determined to be in and of the Work, seeking and accomplishing against all odds the Master's Will. So shall worry no longer choke or strangle the soul, but become instead a "stepping stone of our dead selves to higher things." MARION HALE.

It is better to read one good book leisurely, lingering over the finer passages, returning frequently to an exquisite sentence, closing the volume, now and then, to run down in your own mind a new thought started by its perusal, than to rush in a swift perfunctory manner through half a library.—ALEXANDER SMITH.

MACROCOSM AND MICROCOSM
AITAREYA UPANISHAD

I

ATMA, verily, Universal Self, alone was this in the beginning, nor was aught else with opening and closing eyes.

He beholding said: Let me now put forth worlds.

He put forth these worlds: the Great Deep, the Rays, the Mortal, the Waters. The Great Deep is the Heaven beyond the heavens, the Foundation; the Rays are the mid-world; the Mortal is the world; the Waters are beneath.

He beholding said: Here are worlds for me; let me now put forth Guardians of the worlds.

From the Waters, verily, drawing forth Purusha, the Heavenly Man, He moulded him.

He brooded over him with fervour. Of him, brooded over with fervour, the face was formed, as it were an egg. From the mouth, the voice; from the voice, the Fire-lord. The two nostrils were formed; from the two nostrils the breath; from the breath, the Wind-lord. The two eyes were formed; from the two eyes, vision; from vision, the Sun-lord. The two ears were formed; from the two ears, hearing; from hearing, the Spaces. The skin, with the power of touch, was formed; from the skin, the hairs; from the hairs, the plants and the lords of the forest. The heart was formed; from the heart, the mind; from the mind, the Lunar Lord. The navel was formed; from the navel, the downward-breath; from the downward-breath, Death. The procreative power was formed; from the procreative power, the seed; from the seed, the Waters.

II

They, these Bright Powers, thus put forth, fell forward into the tossing ocean. He visited it with hunger and thirst. To Him they said: Prepare for us an abode, wherein established we may eat the food.

To them He brought a cow. They said: This, verily, is not enough for us!

To them He brought a horse. They said: This, verily, is not enough for us!

To them He brought man. They said: Well done, in truth! For man is a thing well made.

He said to them: Enter ye according to your abodes!

The Fire-lord, becoming voice, entered the mouth. The Wind-lord, becoming breath, entered the two nostrils. The Sun-lord, becoming vision, entered the two eyes. Space, becoming hearing, entered the two ears. The

plants and the lords of the forest, becoming hairs, entered the skin. The Lunar Lord, becoming mind, entered the heart. Death, becoming the downward-breath, entered the navel. The Waters, becoming the seed, entered the procreative power.

To Him hunger and thirst said: Make provision for us two!

To those two He said: Among these Bright Powers, verily, I give you two a place; I make you partakers among them!

Therefore, to whichever of the Bright Powers an offering is made, hunger and thirst are partakers in it.

III

He beholding said: Here now are worlds and Guardians of the worlds. Let me put forth food for them!

He brooded with fervour upon the Waters. From the Waters, brooded upon with fervour, form was born. The form which was born, that, verily, is food.

Then this, put forth, sought to retreat and escape. He sought to grasp it by voice. He was not able to grasp it by voice. If he had grasped it by voice, uttering food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by breath. He was not able to grasp it by breath. If he had grasped it by breath, breathing upon food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by vision. He was not able to grasp it by vision. If he had grasped it by vision, seeing food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by hearing. He was not able to grasp it by hearing. If he had grasped it by hearing, hearing food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by touch. He was not able to grasp it by touch. If he had grasped it by touch, touching food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by mind. He was not able to grasp it by mind. If he had grasped it by mind, thinking of food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by procreative power. He was not able to grasp it by procreative power. If he had grasped it by procreative power, putting forth food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by the downward-breath. He consumed it. He, verily, who grasps food, is the Wind-lord.

He, the Self, beholding said: How may this be now, without me? By which do I enter?

He beholding said: If by voice it be uttered, if by breath it be breathed, if by vision it be seen, if by touch it be touched, if by mind it be thought, if by the downward-breath it be breathed downward, if by the procreative power it be put forth, who am I?

He, opening the head, verily, at the parting of the hair, entered by this door. This is the door, the opening, by name. This is the cause of joy.

Of this, there are three abodes, three dreams. This is an abode. This is an abode. This is an abode.

He, thus entered into birth, considered beings: What being, verily, would wish to speak of any other?

He beheld this man as the essence of the Eternal. I have seen the Eternal! said He. Therefore, His name is I-have-seen. I-have-seen, verily, is His name. He who is I-have-seen, Idan-dra, they call the Lord, Indra, in a mystery; for lovers of mystery, as it were, are the Bright Powers; lovers of mystery, as it were, are the Bright Powers.

IV

In the man, verily, is this germ from the beginning. This is the seed, the fiery energy, brought into being from all the members. He bears a self within himself. When this is conceived in the woman, he engenders it. This is his first birth.

This becomes a part of the woman's own being, a member of herself. Therefore, this injures her not.

She nourishes this self, thus entering her. As nourisher, she is to be nour ished. He, in the beginning, from birth onward, provides nourishment for the young child.

As from birth onward he provides nourishment for the young child, so he provides nourishment for himself, for the continuity of these worlds. For these worlds are thus continued. This is his second birth.

This, as his self, takes his place for holy works. As his other self, having done what should be done, completing his life-span, he goes forth. Going forth verily, from this world, he is born again. This is his third birth.

Thus by a Seer it was declared:

Being yet in the germ, I already knew all the births of these Bright Powers.

A hundred dwellings as of iron have guarded me. Downward like a falcon swiftly I descended.

While yet resting in the germ, verily, Vamadeva spoke thus.

He who has gained this knowledge, ascending after the parting from the body, in that heavenly world gaining all desires, has become immortal. He has become immortal.

V

Who is this Self to whom we draw near? Which of the two is the Self?

He, whereby, verily, he beholds form; whereby, verily, he hears sound; whereby, verily, he smells odours; whereby, verily, he utters speech; whereby, verily, he discerns what is sweet and what is not sweet.

That which is the heart and the mind, is consciousness, spiritual perception, discernment, understanding, wisdom, vision, firmness, thought, knowledge, energy, memory, imagination, will, life, desire, power; these are all names of spiritual perception.

This is the Eternal, this is the Ruler, this is the Lord of beings, this is all the Bright Powers, the five great elements, earth, air, ether, the waters, the lights, and those which are mingled of the fine elements; these and these seeds, the egg-born, the womb-born, the sweat-born, the fission-born; horses, cows, men, elephants; whatever possesses the breath of life, whatever moves, or flies, or remains stable.

All this is guided by spiritual perception; in spiritual perception it is established. The world is guided by spiritual perception. Spiritual perception is the foundation. Spiritual perception is the Eternal.

He, through this spiritual perception, through the Self, ascending from this world, in that heavenly world gaining all desires, has become immortal. He has become immortal.

C. J.

Beloved Master, how rare is liberty! how inadequate our detachment! How often have we not been at the mercy of our attractions, of our passions, of our pride! Help us to break our bonds. Souls which are held to the things of earth by a thousand ties, think they are free, yet there is no slavery like their pretence of liberty. In lieu of the immensity—infinitely loving and holy—of your good pleasure, which you offer them, they prefer the tyranny of their little interests, of their miserable instincts, of their tiniest caprice.—CHARLES SAUVÉ.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Philosopher, who had been plunged in thought, suddenly turned to us with the announcement that he had a wonderful text for a sermon, —"those immortal lines," he said:

"'By the train at Dover
"He had his tail run over:
"It gave the folks a thrill.
"*Though he had no rudder there*
"*He waved his nothing in the air*
"*And went on walking still.*'"

Someone gasped.

"Exactly," the Philosopher continued. "The words are so pregnant with revelation, that comment is almost superfluous; but I am not a clergyman, and my only opportunity to preach is through the charity of the Recorder of the 'Screen.' That there are millions of people in the world who 'wave their nothings in the air, and keep on walking still,' is painfully evident; but are there, or are there not, so-called students of Theosophy who do exactly the same thing? Am I one of them? A truly awful question! Are there not those who, in lieu of a rudder, wave words, shibboleths, 'nothings,'—and keep on walking still—as pleased with themselves as the little dog of that poem?"

"What is the trouble now?" asked the Student, patiently.

"The same trouble. There is no such thing as a new trouble," the Philosopher answered. "A sermon is useless, anyhow, unless it is preached against oneself. I am preaching against myself. I am full of faults, thank Heaven, for faults keep one busy and out of mischief; but I do not count among my faults the common one of blaming my friends or my enemies or my environment for the one and only trouble with which I am afflicted,—the trouble of having a personality which is essentially ass, as all personalities are. The question is, whether words, that perhaps once were things and actions, have become 'nothings'—as the result of our having permitted life to run over us—but which we continue to wave in the air from habit?"

"Must not life inevitably run over us, as we grow older?" asked our Visitor.

"No," the Philosopher replied. "We ought to run over life; we ought to crush *its* tail: that is what we are here for."

"I wish you wouldn't be so cryptic," protested the Student. "Of what particular form of asininity are you accusing yourself? You will find us sympathetic."

The Philosopher laughed. "Thanks," he said; "but instead of eliciting your condolence by exposing myself, I prefer, on this occasion, to incur your indignation by exposing you. And you can always plead not guilty. I as-

sert, then, that you use words which ought to be rudders but which are not, and which, therefore, are mere nothings. You use words like 'cycles,' 'planes,' and 'cyclic progress,' without applying them to the problems of daily life."

"Prove it," said the Student, cheerfully.

"Do you approve of football?"

"No," answered the Student, evidently rather surprised.

"Why not?"

"I think it is a waste of time and that it's brutalizing."

"Do you feel the same way about baseball and hockey?"

"More or less. I suppose games are necessary for young people, for undeveloped people, as a safety-valve for surplus physical energy; but I always deplore the waste. I especially deplore the popularity of games as spectacles where tens of thousands congregate, just as they flocked to gladiatorial shows in the days of decadent Rome."

"I thought you would say that," the Philosopher commented; "and I venture to assert that you have proved the truth of my contention. We are agreed that there are different planes of life: that, for instance, a chela, the disciple of a Master, does not function on the same plane of consciousness as the average slaughterer of the stockyards, and that it would be a mistake to try to instruct an infant class in the higher mathematics. We are agreed, presumably, that chelas do not play football. But you evidently have not realized that the Ashwattha tree grows with its roots in the air, that *Demon est Deus inversus*,—and that football is the only means of leading a certain kind of young man toward the path of discipleship."

The Student looked at him with a glazed eye: either the Philosopher was talking nonsense, or he had something unexpected in reserve. "Please proceed," he said.

"I have known people," the Philosopher proceeded, "whose ego was their universe. They were incapable of eliminating their ego from the most ordinary problem that confronted them. Questions of right and wrong, of wise and unwise, of good taste and bad taste, of buying and selling,—every imaginable question was considered with self as its axis. They could never, in any circumstances, remove themselves from the centre of the stage, or cease to imagine themselves, even in their relations with a canary bird, as the heroic or patient or suffering central sun, around whom events revolved.

"Now chelaship, as we know, means the obliteration of self. The chela envisages a problem utterly without regard to his own participation in it. If a piece of work needs to be done, his sole desire is that the person best qualified to do that piece of work, shall do it. His mind is open to light from all quarters. Should he have committed himself to an opinion, he welcomes, none the less gladly, a different opinion from a junior, as from a superior, when he sees more truth in the other than in his own. His sole desire is for the truth. Being humble, he is detached and, in that sense, impersonal. He is one-pointed in his determination that his Master's will shall be done. He does not *try* to efface himself. Having left himself behind, long ago, he has become free

to think, to decide, to act with an undivided mind and purpose. But the key to his existence lies in the fact that he is one of a group, and that his feeling about himself is what we might imagine to be the feeling of a finger among the ten fingers of a man's hands. He is separate, but the sense of separateness is lost in the common purpose.

"If you were to preach that to people, as an ideal, most of them would not even trouble to scoff, while the few would say, 'That is what we have always maintained; that is Communism; give us what you have, and we'll divide it around; all men are equals, and must be made to eat out of the same trough.' So the few would use the truth for their damnation."

"Pardon me for interrupting you," said the Historian, "but I think the more common perversion is equally dangerous,—the sentimental perversion which springs from telescoping time and telescoping planes. It is the curse of what passes for idealism. America is full of it. Our ancestors were full of it. Most of them came here either to create, or to find ready-made, a new heaven and a new earth. Some came here to find freedom,—forgetting that freedom can exist only when man has freed himself from himself; others came to find wealth, forgetting that the only real wealth is that of character, and that money itself must be paid for, always with labour and often with moral disintegration. In any case, most Americans are born with dreams in their blood, off-setting their immense practical abilities as pioneers. Present them with an ideal, and they'll say, 'That's fine; let's do it; all the world must do it, at once; we can put the financial screws on those bankrupt governments of Europe, and force them to disarm, so that peace shall reign on earth for ever.' They want to jump from where things are, to anything they see as desirable. It is a splendid desire in some cases (though it accounts for many divorces). The danger of it lies in sweeping generalizations, sometimes of approval, sometimes of condemnation, but always springing from failure to see beneath the surface, and to recognize the real purpose or cost of things."

"That," said the Philosopher, "is my case against the Student. He telescopes his planes. He fails to see that one man's poison may be another man's means of salvation. He indulges in wholesale condemnation—football is merely an instance—and remains blind to the beneficent influence of that which he condemns. The Lords of Wisdom know better than to preach. They do not proclaim to the multitude, in big voices from the sky, that man should learn to obliterate himself. They know what the response would be, and that man, after he had recovered from his fright, would do his best to obliterate his neighbour. No, the Lords of Wisdom use man's instincts—his hunting and herding and competitive instincts—to lead him to better things. Tribal warfare was the first means. The victory of the tribe was more important than the victory of the individual. Team work was essential. As tribal wars became less frequent, games took their place, though games were intended as preparation for war. Games required team-work. It may have been family against family or village against village. In any case, the victory of the individual would have been regarded as a crime, if gained at the expense

of the larger unit. It was not merely that an ideal was kept alive, but that actual training and discipline were provided, and still are provided, in preparation for the developments of the future. The Lords of Wisdom *take men as they are*, instead of imagining that because, on another plane, men are souls, the motives of souls should actuate brutish bodies and empty minds."

"But how about the mobs that take part in such games vicariously, yelling from the side-lines? What earthly good can it do them?"

"My dear sir, on what plane do you suppose such people function? What do you expect them to do? Go to Church, or join The Theosophical Society and discuss the merits of Karma? If those who play such games are too often brutish in body and empty in mind, or, perhaps, merely infantile, at what stage of development would you place the spectators, who roar and scream and hoot, and, as you put it, join in the fight vicariously? It is evident to me that in so far as their frenzy permits them to recognize and to admire good team-play—the foundation of which is self-obliteration—they are better off than if they were admiring or pitying themselves, their ordinary occupation."

"Do you suggest," asked the Student, "that such egotistical people as you were talking about, would have been less egotistical if they had played football?"

"It does not follow that they would have been; but they might have been,—depending, of course, upon the extent to which they had proved able to forget themselves in a common aim. The Lords of Wisdom, who guide human progress, must be well aware that man will not surrender anything, least of all himself, except as the result of kicks and buffets. We, who discuss these things, prove it every day of our lives. Some of us learn to kick ourselves: that is the only difference. But there is a type of egotism that can be smashed by other people only, and only by those whom the culprit accepts as his peers. The criticism of elders is attributed to jealousy, to lack of appreciation, to natural superiority, to senility,—to anything, so long as the 'reason' serves as an excuse for remaining of the same opinion still. If a member of a football team steal the ball for his own glory at the expense of his team, or fail to pass it for fear that another, instead of himself, may win a goal, or claim credit which should go to another or to his team as a whole,—you know what is done to him. It is primitive but highly effective. The sinner is likely to learn."

"May I ask," the Lawyer inquired, "whether you encourage your boy at college to play football? And if not, why not?"

The Lawyer and the Philosopher are intimate friends, and the Lawyer knew that his leading question could meet with but one reply. He evidently wanted to see how his friend would cover himself.

"I do not encourage him to do anything of the sort," was the Philosopher's retort. "He is my son, and I have a hopeful disposition. My belief is, as I have told him, that he will have inherited sufficient intelligence from his mother (his mother and I play that, to and fro, when talking to him), sufficient intelligence, good taste and good feeling, to make physical kicks unnecessary when it comes to learning to forget himself for the sake of a larger unit. The

family is the true unit. Service of the family, self-identification with the family, was intended to be the check on egotism and to supply the preparatory training for membership in a group of disciples under a Master. It is only in 'advanced' and democratic countries that family life has ceased to have any meaning, and that football and similar games have to be used as substitutes. Surely you must realize that in our land of freedom, the captain of a team has infinitely more authority over a boy than his father and mother and grandparents combined! Things have changed since my day, so I am no longer sure if it is the captain or the trainer or the pack, which rends a culprit limb from limb: but the principle is the same. My boy is not naturally egotistical,—his mother's friends say that he takes after her. My boy is an exceptional boy, and therefore should not need the same kind of discipline as a savage. Besides, I venture to say he has parents; and parents are scarce."

"Not bad!" said the Lawyer.

"And now," the Student remarked, "having placed football, to your own satisfaction, among the weapons of the gods, perhaps you will tell us something of the benefits of drunkenness."

"On that subject," the Philosopher answered readily, "I prefer to quote an old and experienced missionary, who worked among drunkards for nearly half a century, and who, before the days of Prohibition, advocated such laws with zealous conviction. She found (my friend was a woman) that after Prohibition went into effect, 'dope fiends' became more plentiful, drunkards fewer, converts fewer. Fewer men were 'down and out,' there were fewer men on park benches, there were fewer men in need of a cup of coffee and of a warm place to sit. Sin, she said, was just as rampant, but, in the old days, men who lived 'in sin' nearly always drank, and drink brought them to the gutter, face to face with the consequences of their sin. They drifted into missions for a bed, or for coffee and a sandwich, hearing 'the Word' in spite of themselves,—sometimes touched by it, sometimes converted. By making drink much more difficult to obtain, and much more costly, such men were kept from the gutter but were not kept from sin. She did not definitely turn against Prohibition, but she came to realize that her Lord (she was a simple and saintly Christian) had used an existing evil for beneficent ends."

"To my mind," said the Lawyer, "the most clear-cut illustration of the principle you are working on—though how you came to hitch it to a tailless dog is more——"

"It wasn't easy," the Philosopher interjected; "but I read those lines in *Punch*, and they were obviously destined for the 'Screen.' Unaided, the Recorder would never have taken the trouble. Thanks for your congratulations."

The Lawyer sighed. "I was going to suggest," he said, "that the best illustration of your principle is what Faber and others call the vice of Human Respect, or the constant submission of ourselves and our conduct for the approval and, if possible, for the applause of other people. The man who tells a funny story, not for pure love of its humour, but because he wants to be recognized as a raconteur of funny stories; the woman who will wear her hair dis-

guised as huge periwinkles over her ears, not because she thinks it is pretty or becoming, but for fear that other women will think her *démodée* should she fail to do so; the man who sings, not for love of music, but that his voice may be admired; the man who stoops because he is afraid of being thought proud; the woman who spends money for fear of being thought poor,—all of them perpetually on all-fours, asking to have their heads patted by Public Opinion, though Public Opinion may be represented by nothing more formidable than an elemental in their own minds,—these are the people who notoriously exemplify the vice of which I am speaking.

"However,—while we must see how incompatible any such attitude is with discipleship (or, for that matter, with ordinary self-respect), and must see our need to decide and do things on the basis of their inherent merits, instead of for effect, we must also see that civilization itself would cease in an instant if it were not for this vice. The vast majority of people are as incapable of deciding and doing a thing on the basis of its inherent rightness or wrongness, as they are incapable of discriminating between the Holy Spirit and a spook. Further, they do not want to; they want to decide things to please themselves, for the satisfaction of their immediate appetite; and the only consideration that keeps them within bounds is the fear of being found out, the fear of Public Opinion—is Human Respect. In other words, and to repeat what the Philosopher said a few minutes ago: the Lords of Wisdom take people as they find them, using the material (the motives) at hand, even though the material be the reverse of spiritual. That which is poison for the disciple may be the ordinary man's remedy and cure."

"I doubt if many of us can afford as yet to eliminate Human Respect entirely as a motive," the Engineer suggested. "So long as we continue to identify ourselves at times with the lower, personal self, we shall need, at those times, to reinforce the muffled voice of our higher nature with whatever props we can find among lower motives. Vanity has often saved a beginner from making a hopeless and everlasting mess of what he has started out to do. Personal resentment and irritation have been suppressed, at least outwardly (better than nothing), for fear of 'making a show of himself' in the eyes of his fellows. Further, there are, I think, forms of Human Respect which are altogether justifiable. I doubt if there be one man in a million who is able to decide anything on the basis of its inherent rightness or wrongness,—anything, that is, except the cruder, external sins. It is nonsense to suppose that, from where he is, he can jump to God for enlightenment. His only chance is to look to the opinion of those he has learned to respect, and who, whether or not more highly evolved than he is, at least have the advantage of detachment about his own affairs. We *ought* to take into account and defer to the opinion of our superiors, if we have sufficient grace to recognize the superiority of anyone to ourselves."

"But you are not talking about Human Respect," the Lawyer protested. "You are talking now about a totally different thing. Have you ever travelled in the 'smoker' of a Pullman car, with half a dozen salesmen, and watched

them 'sell themselves'? Some will do it bluntly, by bragging about their own achievements; others, to exalt themselves, will brag about the firm they represent. Occasionally one of them will brag about his children, or his ancestors (usually a Southerner), or his automobile, or his collection of postage stamps, or the amount he can drink; but always to 'sell themselves,' to win admiration and envy, to impress others with a sense of their own importance. All of them lie, and the biggest liars are always the most credulous. There are unwritten rules, as there always are when men congregate for 'talk'; but the only rule of serious moment is that if Smith listens to Brown for ten minutes, it is not fair for Brown to go back to his seat in the parlour car until Smith has bragged to him for the same length of time. They dress and in many cases eat, with the same object in view. Practically all of them would eat with their fingers if it were not for this same 'vice' of Human Respect. Hideous, is it not! Yet I insist that every civilization that has ever existed, either in the East or in the West, has been founded upon, and has been held together by, this detestable and most vulgar of all human weaknesses. The social anarchist, who thinks he has freed himself from it—and who, some people would say, had been delivered from it prematurely, to his own undoing—is invariably the man who, having failed to win the approval of the many, turns, for solace, to failures like himself, whose bitterness he can hope to exceed and whose envy, therefore, he can hope to inflame."

"And yet, and yet," said the Ancient slowly, "deep in the heart of every real man there is that which desires no approval which is not wise and just, and that turns to the Lodge only for a verdict upon our deeds. From that centre, we distrust the good opinion of those who love us, fearing the bias of their love, —craving the perfect justice of those whose love alone is perfect. I do not know how the great ones feel—perhaps glad when praised by greater—but I do know that few things are more terrible, more crushing, than the generosity which showers gratitude upon us when our hearts are burdened still with a thousand sorrows for our sin . . . That, however, is a parenthesis, and perhaps the Student would like to say——"

"I should like to say," the Student responded, "that I am in sympathy with the Philosopher's main premise. I have been reading bits of Mark Twain's *Autobiography*, and it is tragic to see how he needed Theosophy and how utterly, for lack of it, he missed the purpose of life. Death and suffering everywhere: and what for, what for? Cruelty and folly everywhere: again, what for? We, who are students of Theosophy, ought to know better; but I am afraid that I, for one, am still too much inclined to see life in terms of joy and sorrow, looking for the 'use' or lesson of an incarnation in a wholesale way, as if the soul, at the end of its journey, were to be met by the Higher Self with, —'I told you so! *Now* don't you see that ambition (or vanity, or revenge, or whatever the main fault of the "deceased" may have been) could bring you nothing but trouble! Now will you be good!'

"It is an old and, I am sure, a true saying, that the Spirit works in unseen ways, in quiet ways; and it must follow that the obvious is not necessarily the

most real. Our attention is held by the obvious—as by sorrow and joy. They, doubtless, teach many lessons of which we know nothing as yet; but I suspect, also, that daily futilities (as they seem) are the source of most of our gain. Take such a thing as our daily jostling with crowds, on the streets, in surface-cars and subways. Just because it is an experience which people in our modern civilization take for granted, without thought, as inevitable,—we may infer that it is used as a hidden means of instruction. The average man may learn from it a certain 'give and take,' an awareness of the elbows of other people, and occasionally a certain consideration for others. What I mean is that an incarnation which to most of us would seem meaningless, purposeless, and sheer waste, so far as the 'thread-soul' is concerned, may actually have been full of instruction, could we but see beneath the common-place exterior and gauge the significance of small daily contacts and compulsions."

"One thing is certain," said the Lawyer. "It is impossible for a boy at school to see the real purpose of much of his instruction, or to understand what he gains by discipline. Some boys are so foolish as to decide in their own minds that the whole procedure is unreasonable, and perhaps that it is a device of their parents to keep them from natural enjoyments. For us, who are pupils in the larger school of life, to expect to understand its ultimate purpose, or to appreciate the benefits of its discipline, would be worse than childish. How *can* we understand! If Mark Twain, like so many others, condemned life because he could not fathom its meaning, he showed that, in the deeper sense, he never grew up."

"I do not suggest," commented the Philosopher, "that life as it is, has been designed by the Lords of Wisdom, in all its details, as the best way of effecting man's salvation—that games, for instance, have been divinely instituted for divine ends—but that man, having 'sought out many inventions,' and having contrived these things for his own entertainment, has left the Lords of Wisdom no choice but to use them, to make the best of them, for ends which are nearly the opposite of man's."

"Not only our 'inventions,'" added the Historian, "but our 'necessary' activities, such as eating, dressing, washing, must all of them be means to the same end,—spiritual growth."

"I agree," the Philosopher replied; "and I believe that this is the essential difference between optimism and pessimism. Most people would say that an optimist is one who 'looks on the bright side of things,' while the pessimist does the reverse. This means that both of them look on one side of things only, while my contention is that we should strive to see things as they are—childish things as childish, vile things as vile—but then, beneath their surface, should learn to recognize the good ends they may be made to serve, and, above all, should see that *utility depends upon the user*. Always there are two users, making, with the thing used, the eternal and omnipresent Trinity: there is the man who uses the thing, and the god who uses the man. As someone once said, 'He laughs best who laughs last.' We must become true Optimists by learning to anticipate that last laugh—at ourselves!" T.

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

October 8th, 1913.

DEAR——

There are two points I want to write you about:

(1) You still look too much at what you are not; think too much of what you have not (as, for instance, leisure); estimate people and events by what you would like them to be, and not by what they are. It is the secret of the trouble with your Sunday School class. You form, in your mind, an ideal of what you want, and you think of, and try to treat those boys as if they approximated your ideal of them, instead of accepting them as a gang of ignorant young ruffians, with few even half-decent instincts, and quantities of glaring faults. The consequence is that you are constantly disappointed and often discouraged. Instead of seeing the (very limited, it is true) good you do them, you dwell on the failure to attain your ideal. You are seeking for results, and the results *you* want to attain, and are troubled when you do not get them.

(2) The other point is an effort to put a finger on another characteristic of yours. It is elusive and hard to describe. I can get at it best by an analogy. Many people, when talking to a foreigner who does not understand English well, will either talk in a loud voice as if to a deaf person, or, and this is the point, they will talk a sort of broken English. By some curious psychology, they seem to think that the foreigner will understand better if they do not talk simple English. Few people talk sense to a baby. Now you do this sort of thing constantly in your intercourse with others. You are not simple and direct, but seem to believe that, in order to be intelligible, you must express your ideas in some stilted way and according to some form. See if you can work out anything in this which conveys a meaning to you.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

October 20, 1913.

DEAR——

I am directed to send you the following comment on a recent fortnightly report:

"You have not yet got it into your *heart* that it is not what is done, but the spirit in which the least thing is done, that counts."

I have your letter and the two reports; these latter, and the loose leaves, I return.

I did *not* say that —— was "simple and direct." Once, when talking to you about such things, I said, "Look at the perfectly simple way —— does it."

But that referred to that particular thing and is very different from saying that he was simple and direct.

—— is coming on for a fortnight. She has recently begun to realize that *she* can become a disciple *now*, and it has been a revelation to her. She is taking it seriously. I hope you and the others can set her such an example, while she is here, that she will return full of enthusiasm and devotion. Please look after her a bit.

With kind regards, I am,
Sincerely,
C. A. Griscom, Jr.

October 26th, 1913.

Dear——

St. François de Sales once wrote to a nun, "It is the evil of evils amongst souls of good will that they should always wish to be what they cannot be, and that which they can be they do not desire to be." I wonder if he had you in mind?

Later, October 27th: I return a week's record which came this morning. Thanks for your note accompanying it.

I suppose you cannot help thinking of what you do not understand instead of what you do!

I am glad you saw ——. She needs to calm down. Help her to go quietly, inside and out.

With kind regards, I am,
Sincerely yours,
C. A. Griscom, Jr.

January 1st, 1914.

Dear——

My first letter of the New Year. May I again, therefore, offer you my best wishes, and my earnest desire that the year brings you many of the things your soul longs for. I shall not say *everything*, for that is asking for more than can be hoped for in any one year, however glorious.

I return some recent records. I have not re-read or commented on them, for I feel that for the present you have enough to think about and to do, but I shall be glad to have a talk before long, as there are one or two things I should like to say.

Again with best wishes, I am,
Sincerely yours,
C. A. Griscom, Jr.

If you will look over these records and find whether there is any specific point you wish to ask about, I shall be glad to try.

January 4th, 1914.

DEAR——

I enclose something which has been given to me to send you if I think you can stand it. I think you can. Indeed I think you must, for the present state of affairs must not continue. Please give it the most careful consideration and then carry out the several recommendations.

"You should tell her to stop thinking about herself. She is like a squirrel in a cage, trying to watch her reflected images in the revolving wires. She is like a patient constantly taking her temperature, analysing her own states and feelings, symptoms and pains. You have corrected her for 'fussing' about the concerns of others, because this also was an expression of the same tendency: the mind fixed on self projecting itself at others, and seeing all things in terms of its own limitations. While you have recognized her good motive, both in this and that, you have realized that one cause of her discontent with you has been your lack of interest in her morbidly introspective peregrinations: like the physician who, instantly recognizing a case of hypochondriasis, listens with intentional lack of concern to the self-diagnosis of the subject. People in that condition may or may not be able to stand the truth. If you give her this, you will do so on your own responsibility, and at your own risk.

"As to remedy: she should write no reports or records of any kind until further notice; she should have no conversations with you, or about herself. Constructively, she should turn her entire attention to the Master—to his nature, character, works and plans, never as affecting the duty of others, but only for the purpose of trying to understand him better.

"Into all work given her to do, whether in the T. S. or otherwise, she should throw herself with ardour for the Master's sake, not watching the effect upon herself, but leaving the results to him.

"If she will take this prescription faithfully, she will soon break loose from her chains. She has it in her, as you always have said, to do so."

With best wishes, as always,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

January 21st, 1914.

DEAR——

I see no objections to your speaking of your recent experiences to ——: on the contrary I think it might help you, for they may be able to see some of your troubles more clearly than you can. Therefore, to this extent, I am able to modify the previous prohibition regarding your speaking of yourself, provided that you do so with the definite intention of seeking light.

With kind regards,

I am, as always,

C. A. GRISCOM.

February 11th, 1914.

DEAR——

I was very glad to get your good letter.

The matter is not in my hands. Doubtless, in due time, I shall be advised when we may resume our relationship on the old basis.

In the meantime, I trust that you will go on trying as you have been doing, for that is what will count in the end.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

April 1st, 1914.

DEAR——

I am very glad that you feel as you do, for I have had and always shall have a constant and unalterable desire to do anything I can to help you.

The question of when and how remains, however; and this is not in my hands. At the last analysis it is chiefly in your own.

With most cordial regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

Feast of St. Catherine, 1914.

DEAR——

I will show your note to ——, from whom you ask for the same kind of criticism that was given to —— and ——. But what was thus done for them, they earned by accepting criticism for several years, with more or less gratitude, and with less, rather than more, resentment and hurt feelings.

To put it in another way: they can stand a small amount of highly diluted frankness, and they *accept* what is said. You have not yet been able to do this.

Even when there is no active resentment, which is not the way your temperament reacts, there are hurt feelings, confusion, bewilderment, misunderstanding; so that it really does not help you, but hinders.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

May 25th, 1914.

DEAR——

First to answer your last letter. There is no need as yet for you to do anything. When there is—if the time comes—you will be told. In the meantime please let me express my personal appreciation of your offer. I know what those things cost.

Then there is your former letter about penances, which you spoke of yesterday. I had forgotten it. I have looked it over, and I see no objection to your doing Nos. I and III, but not No. II. No. I is no coffee for breakfast when getting up late. No. II, I do not advise. No. III is about self will, and choosing the less agreeable way of doing small things: doing the hardest and least agreeable of a series of things first; not crossing your feet; etc. These are all admirable and useful practices.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRSICOM.

July 3rd, 1914.

DEAR——

I am glad you wrote that letter, for I have been worried and troubled about you, and this letter shows a little better condition. You are having a hard time:—you are making a hard time for yourself—for that is the only way we have a hard time; but we cannot help it,—much, so there is no great consolation in hearing that our troubles are self-created! The sympathy of your friends flows to you, for your pain and trouble, no matter how caused.

It will pass—all things do, save those of the spiritual world; and when we are in a sea of confusion and misunderstanding, we must learn to find comfort in the fundamental facts of life—that all pain and trouble do pass, and that we get back to peace and understanding.

It seems to me that the plans for your summer should be comfortable, convenient, and enjoyable. I sincerely hope you will find them so. Indeed I hope you will make them so, as you can if you try. . . .

I will write you again from ——. This is just a word scratched off in great haste amidst many interruptions, while trying to finish work to catch a train

As always,

C. A. GRISCOM.

July 5th, 1914.

DEAR——

I have given careful and prayerful consideration to your condition and needs, and as a result I am directed to ask you to make a new start.

Please give your best attention and best efforts to the following:—

1. Forget, so far as you can, all the specific directions you have received heretofore, which may seem to you to conflict with what follows.

2. Make it your principal practice to cultivate a sense of your own unworthiness, your insignificance, your unimportance, your entire lack of ability, merit, or capacity. Be meek, humble, obedient, retiring, self-effacing. Empty yourself of self—of self-love, self-will, of self-pity, of self-reference—by constant self-denial; and thus enable the Master to fill you with himself. "Nature abhors a vacuum." Make yourself a vacuum in this sense, and pray ceaselessly that he will fill you with his spirit.

3. Do not make suggestions to anyone about anything. Do not complain of anything or any body, to yourself or to anyone else.

4. Accept all crosses, and trials, and discomforts, illnesses, pains, depression, discouragement, as opportunities for self-sacrifice—as favours shown you by the Master, as steps upon the ladder you wish to climb. Seek reproof, humiliations, scoldings.

5. Pray ceaselessly for others, and particularly for those you like least and who get on your nerves most. Make yourself act towards them especially as if you loved to be with them, and enjoyed every moment of their companionship. Never avoid them, or opportunities to see and serve them; but do not force yourself or your offers of service upon them. Simply be ready at all times to take advantage of the opportunities which arise naturally.

6. Read your devotional books regularly, especially Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation*, and those giving an account of the training of novices in the religious orders; and meditate and emulate, not the practices necessarily, but the frames of mind and feelings, which you find in such accounts, of their way of seeking and accepting mortifications, humiliations, and reproofs.

7. I want you to try to get out of the atmosphere you have been trying to live in, and to get into the simple atmosphere of religious training and discipline, of body, mind, and will,—especially mind and will.

Do not adopt any ascetical practices or penances without previous permission. Your life will give you almost ceaseless opportunity to practise mortification, and in ways you do not like, which is the best kind, the only true kind, of penance.

Above all, cultivate humility, simplicity, meekness, self-effacement, self-sacrifice. Develop a sense of your unworthiness, your insignificance, your littleness, your unimportance. Take each of these in turn as your subject of prayer and meditation, and endeavour to feel these qualities and attributes in your heart, that you may be able to say at last, with Saint Paul, I live no longer, but Christ liveth in me.

Above all, and back of all these efforts, try to realize and feel the presence and interest, and love of the Master,—his concern, his solicitude, his love for you; his desire for your love; his desire for your regeneration and better understanding; his wish that you should get closer to him by this road of self-denial and self-elimination. Make him your confidant in all your efforts. Ask him each morning to help you in your prayer and meditation to feel more of the particular quality you have selected for that day.

Make up your mind to follow this method faithfully, and more and more thoroughly, year after year, life after life, if necessary, until it opens your understanding and brings you to him.

I enclose some extracts giving something of the spirit I should like you to emulate. Most of them are from the life of Sœur Thérèse de Jésus.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. Griscom.

July 12th, 1914.

DEAR——

The advice in my last letter was not a *volte face*. As you learn to read, you must at times pass back to the alphabet and its fundamental sounds and meaning.

The fact that it seems to you a *volte face* means that you never thoroughly assimilated the significance of the earlier and basic instruction. Never mind. Few do. Now is the time. You will find happiness in it.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

July 16th, 1914.

DEAR——

You do not seem to me to be happy. To put it positively, you seem to me to be acutely miserable. This is wrong. "We are closest to the heart of things when we are happy; when in spite of trials and adversities a fountain of joy and gladness springs within us."

Won't you please think of this and try to be happy. Do not worry about what may be, do not look ahead to conditions which may never come about.

Remember all "trials are ephemeral and will pass; the joy is immortal and divine and endures for ever." You are much on my mind, and I hate to have people on my mind—and heart!

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

Happiness is the light which comes from the East and disappears in the West. The whole world has it and thrills; but it passes.—LACORDAIRE.

CULTURE OF CONCENTRATION[1]

PART I

THE term most generally in use to express what is included under the above title is SELF CULTURE. Now it seems to express well enough, for a time at least, the practice referred to by those who desire to know the truth. But, in fact, it is inaccurate from a theosophic standpoint. For the self is held to be that designated in the Indian books as Ishwara, which is a portion of the eternal spirit enshrined in each human body. That this is the Indian view there is no doubt. The *Bhagavad-Gita*, in Chapter 15, says that an eternal portion of this spirit, "having assumed life in this world of life, attracts the heart and the five senses which belong to nature. Whatever body Ishwara enters or quits, it is connected with it by snatching those senses from nature, even as the breeze snatches perfumes from their very bed. This spirit approaches the objects of sense by presiding over the ear, the eye, the touch, the taste, and the smell, and also over the heart"; and in an earlier chapter, "the Supreme spirit within this body is called the Spectator and admonisher, sustainer, enjoyer, great Lord, and also highest soul"; and again, "the Supreme eternal soul, even when existing within—or connected with—the body, is not polluted by the actions of the body."

Elsewhere in these books this same spirit is called the self, as in a celebrated sentence which in Sanscrit is "*Atmanam atmana pashya*," meaning, "Raise the self by the self," and all through the Upanishads, where the self is constantly spoken of as the same as the Ishwara of *Bhagavad-Gita*. Max Müller thinks the word "self" expresses best in English the ideas of the Upanishads on this head.

It therefore follows that such a thing as culture of this self, which in its very nature is eternal, unchangeable, and unpollutable by any action, cannot be. It is only from inadequacy of terms that students and writers using the English tongue are compelled to say "self culture," while when they say it, they admit that they know the self cannot be cultured.

What they wish to express is, "such culture or practice to be pursued by us as shall enable us, while on earth, to mirror forth the wisdom and fulfil the behests of the self within, which is all-wise and all good."

As the use of this term, "self culture," demands a constant explanation either outwardly declared or inwardly assented to, it is wise to discard it altogether and substitute that which will express the practice aimed at without raising a contradiction. For another reason also the term should be discarded. That is, that it assumes a certain degree of selfishness, for, if we use it as referring to something that we do only for ourself, we separate at once between us and the rest of the human brotherhood. Only in one way can we use it without contradiction or without explanation, and that is by admitting we selfishly desire to cultivate ourselves, thus at once running against a prime rule in theosophic life and one so often and so strenuously insisted on,

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that the idea of personal self must be uprooted. Of course, as we will not negative this rule, we thus again have brought before us the necessity for a term that does not arouse contradictions. That new term should, as nearly as possible, shadow forth the three essential things in the action, that is, the instrument, the act, and the agent, as well as the incitement to action; or, knowledge itself, the thing to be known or done, and the person who knows.

This term is CONCENTRATION. In the Indian books it is called Yoga. This is translated also as Union, meaning a union with the Supreme Being, or, as it is otherwise put, "the object of spiritual knowledge is the Supreme Being."

There are two great divisions of Yoga found in the ancient books, and they are called Hatha-Yoga and Raj-Yoga.

Hatha-Yoga is a practical mortification of the body by means of which certain powers are developed. It consists in the assumption of certain postures that aid the work, and certain kinds of breathing that bring on changes in the system, together with other devices. It is referred to in the 4th chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* thus: "Some devotees sacrifice the sense of hearing and the other senses in the fires of restraint; some offer objects of sense, such as sound, in the fires of the senses. Some also sacrifice inspiration of breath in expiration, and expiration in inspiration, by blocking up the channels of inspiration and expiration, desirous of retaining their breath. Others, by abstaining from food, sacrifice life in their life."

In various treatises these methods are set forth in detail, and there is no doubt at all that by pursuing them one can gain possession of sundry abnormal powers. There is risk, however, especially in the case of people in the West where experienced gurus or teachers of these things are not found. These risks consist in this, that while an undirected person is doing according to the rules of Hatha-Yoga, he arouses about him influences that do him harm, and he also carries his natural functions to certain states now and then when he ought to stop for a while, but, having no knowledge of the matter, may go on beyond that and produce injurious effects. Then, again, Hatha-Yoga is a difficult thing to pursue, and one that must be pushed to the point of mastery and success. Few of our Western people are by nature fitted for such continuous and difficult labour on the mental and astral planes. Thus, being attracted to Hatha-Yoga by the novelty of it, and by the apparent pay that it offers in visible physical results, they begin without knowledge of the difficulty, and stopping after a period of trial they bring down upon themselves consequences that are wholly undesirable.

The greatest objection to it, however, is that it pertains to the material and semi-material man,—roughly speaking, to the body, and what is gained through it is lost at death.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* refers to this and describes what happens in these words: "All of these, indeed, being versed in sacrifice, have their sins destroyed by these sacrifices. But he alone reaches union with the Supreme being who eats of the ambrosia left from a sacrifice." This means that the Hatha-Yoga practice represents the mere sacrifice itself, whereas the other kind is the ambrosia arising from the sacrifice, or "the perfection of spiritual cultivation," and that leads to Nirvana. The means for attaining the "perfection of spiritual cultivation" are found in Raj-Yoga or, as we shall term it for the present, Culture of Concentration.

When concentration is perfected, we are in a position to use the knowledge that is ever within reach but which ordinarily eludes us continually. That which is usually called knowledge is only an intellectual comprehension of the outside, visible forms assumed by certain realities. Take what is called scientific knowledge of minerals and metals. This is merely a classification of material phenomena and an empirical acquisition. It knows what certain minerals and metals are useful for, and what some of their properties are. Gold is known to be pure, soft, yellow, and extremely ductile, and by a series of accidents it has been discovered to be useful in medicine and the arts. But even to this day there is a controversy, not wholly settled, as to whether gold is held mechanically or chemically in crude ore. Similarly with minerals. The crystalline forms are known and classified.

And yet a new theory has arisen, coming very near to the truth, that we do not know matter in reality in this way, but only apprehend certain phenomena presented to us by matter, and variously called, as the phenomena alter, gold, wood, iron, stone, and so on. But whether the minerals, metals, and vegetables have further properties that are only to be apprehended by

still other and undeveloped senses, science will not admit. Passing from inanimate objects to the men and women about us, this ordinary intellectual knowledge aids us no more than before. We see bodies with different names and of different races, but below the outer phenomena our everyday intellect will not carry us. This man we suppose to have a certain character assigned to him after experience of his conduct, but it is still only provisional, for none of us is ready to say that we know him either in his good or his bad qualities. We know there is more to him than we can see or reason about, but what, we cannot tell. It eludes us continually. And when we turn to contemplate ourselves, we are just as ignorant as we are about our fellow man. Out of this has arisen an old saying: "Every man knows what he is, but no one knows what he will be."

There must be in us a power of discernment, the cultivation of which will enable us to know whatever is desired to be known. That there is such a power is affirmed by teachers of occultism, and the way to acquire it is by cultivating concentration.

It is generally overlooked, or not believed, that the inner man who is the one to have these powers has to grow up to maturity, just as the body has to mature before its organs fulfil their functions fully. By *inner man* I do not mean the higher self—the Ishwara before spoken of, but that part of us which is called soul, or astral man, or vehicle, and so on. All these terms are subject to correction, and should not be held rigidly to the meanings given by various writers. Let us premise, first, the body now visible; second, the inner man—not the spirit; and third, the spirit itself.

Now while it is quite true that the second—or inner man—has latent all the powers and peculiarities ascribed to the astral body, it is equally true that those powers are, in the generality of persons, still latent or only very partially developed.

This inner being is, so to say, inextricably entangled in the body, cell for cell and fibre for fibre. He exists in the body somewhat in the way the fibre of the mango fruit exists in the mango. In that fruit we have the inside nut with thousands of fine fibres spreading out from it through the yellow pulp around. And as you eat it, there is great difficulty in distinguishing the pulp from the fibre. So that the inner being of which we are speaking cannot do much when away from his body, and is always influenced by it. It is not therefore easy to leave the body at will and roam about in the double. The stories we hear of this as being so easily done may be put down to strong imagination, vanity, or other causes. One great cause for error in respect to these doubles is that a clairvoyant is quite likely to mistake a mere picture of the person's thought for the person himself. In fact, among occultists who know the truth, the stepping out of the body at will and moving about the world is regarded as a most difficult feat, and for the reasons above hinted at. Inasmuch as the person is so interwoven with his body, it is absolutely necessary, before he can take his astral form about the country, for him first carefully to extract it, fibre by fibre, from the surrounding pulp of blood, bones, mucus, bile, skin, and flesh. Is this easy? It is neither easy nor quick of accomplishment, nor all done at one operation. It has to be the result of years of careful training and numerous experiments. And it *cannot* be consciously done until the inner man has developed and cohered into something more than irresponsible and quivering jelly. This development and coherence are gained by perfecting the power of concentration.

Nor is it true, as the matter has been presented to me by experiment and teaching, that even in our sleep we go rushing about the country seeing our friends and enemies or tasting earthly joys at distant points. In all cases where the man has acquired some amount of concentration, it is quite possible that the sleeping body is deserted altogether, but such cases are as yet not in the majority.

Most of us remain quite close to our slumbering forms. It is not necessary for us to go away in order to experience the different states of consciousness, which is the privilege of every man; but we do not go away over miles of country until we are able, and we cannot be able until the necessary ethereal body has been acquired and has learned how to use its powers.

Now, this ethereal body has its own organs which are the essence or real basis of the senses described by men. The outer eye is only the instrument by which the real power of sight experiences that which relates to sight; the ear has its inner master—the power of hearing, and so

on with every organ. These real powers within flow from the spirit to which we referred at the beginning of this paper. That spirit approaches the objects of sense by presiding over the different organs of sense. And whenever it withdraws itself the organs cannot be used. As when a sleep-walker moves about with open eyes which do not see anything, although objects are there and the different parts of the eye are perfectly normal and uninjured.

Ordinarily there is no demarcation to be observed between these inner organs and the outer; the inner ear is found to be too closely interknit with the outer to be distinguished apart. But when concentration has begun, the different inner organs begin to awake, as it were, and to separate themselves from the chains of their bodily counterparts. Thus the man begins to duplicate his powers. His bodily organs are not injured, but remain for use upon the plane to which they belong, and he is acquiring another set which he can use apart from the others in the plane of nature peculiarly theirs.

We find here and there cases where certain parts of this inner body have been by some means developed beyond the rest. Sometimes the inner head alone is developed, and we have one who can see or hear clairvoyantly or clairaudiently; again, only a hand is developed apart from the rest, all the other being nebulous and wavering. It may be a right hand, and it will enable the owner to have certain experiences that belong to the plane of nature to which the right hand belongs, say the positive side of touch and feeling.

But in these abnormal cases there are always wanting the results of concentration. They have merely protruded one portion, just as a lobster extrudes his eye on the end of the structure which carries it. Or take one who has thus curiously developed one of the inner eyes, say the left. This has a relation to a plane of nature quite different from that appertaining to the hand, and the results in experience are just as diverse. He will be a clairvoyant of a certain order, only able to recognize that which relates to his one-sided development, and completely ignorant of many other qualities inherent in the thing seen or felt, because the proper organs needed to perceive them have had no development. He will be like a two-dimensional being who cannot possibly know that which three-dimensional beings know, or like ourselves as compared with four-dimensional entities.

In the course of the growth of this ethereal body several things are to be observed.

It begins by having a cloudy, wavering appearance, with certain centres of energy caused by the incipiency of organs that correspond to the brain, heart, lungs, spleen, liver, and so on. It follows the same course of development as a solar system, and is, in fact, *governed and influenced by the very solar system to which the world belongs on which the being may be incarnate.* With us it is governed by our own solar orb.

If the practice of concentration be kept up, this cloudy mass begins to gain coherence and to shape itself into a body with different organs. As they grow they must be used. Essays are to be made with them, trials, experiments. In fact, just as a child must creep before it can walk, and must learn walking before it can run, so this ethereal man must do the same. But as the child can see and hear much farther than it can creep or walk, so this being usually begins to see and to hear before it can leave the vicinity of the body on any lengthy journey.

Certain hindrances then begin to manifest themselves which, when properly understood by us, will give us good substantial reasons for the practising of the several virtues enjoined in holy books and naturally included under the term of Universal Brotherhood.

One is that sometimes it is seen that this nebulous forming body is violently shaken, or pulled apart, or burst into fragments that at once have a tendency to fly back into the body and take on the same entanglement that we spoke of at first. *This is caused by anger*, and this is why the sages all dwell upon the need of calmness. When the student allows anger to arise, the influence of it is at once felt by the ethereal body, and manifests itself in an uncontrollable trembling which begins at the centre and violently pulls apart the hitherto coherent particles. If allowed to go on it will disintegrate the whole mass, which will then re-assume its natural place in the body. The effect following this is, that a long time has to elapse before the ethereal body can be again created. And each time this happens the result is the same. Nor does it make any difference what the cause for the anger may be. There is no such thing as having what is called "righteous anger" in this study and escaping these inevitable consequences.

Whether your "rights" have been unjustly and flagrantly invaded or not does not matter. The anger is a force that will work itself out in its appointed way. Therefore anger must be strictly avoided, and it cannot be avoided unless charity and love—absolute toleration—are cultivated.

But anger may be absent and yet still another thing happen. The ethereal form may have assumed quite a coherence and definiteness. But it is observed that, instead of being pure and clear and fresh, it begins to take on a cloudy and disagreeable colour, the precursor of putrefaction, which invades every part and by its effects precludes any further progress, and at last reacts upon the student so that anger again manifests itself. This is the effect of envy. Envy is not a mere trifle that produces no physical result. It has a powerful action, as strong in its own field as that of anger. It not only hinders the further development, but attracts to the student's vicinity thousands of malevolent beings of all classes that precipitate themselves upon him and wake up or bring on every evil passion. Envy, therefore, must be extirpated, and it cannot be got rid of as long as the personal idea is allowed to remain in us.

Another effect is produced on this ethereal body by vanity. Vanity represents the great illusion of nature. It brings up before the soul all sorts of erroneous or evil pictures, or both, and drags the judgment so away that once more anger or envy will enter, or such course be pursued that violent destruction by outside causes falls upon the being. As in one case related to me. The man had made considerable progress, but at last allowed vanity to rule. This was followed by the presentation to his inner sight of most extraordinary images and ideas, which in their turn so affected him that he attracted to his sphere hordes of elementals seldom known to students and quite indescribable in English. These at last, as is their nature, laid siege to him, and one day produced all about the plane of his astral body an effect similar in some respects to that which follows an explosion of the most powerful explosive known to science. The consequence was, his ethereal form was so suddenly fractured that by repercussion the whole nature of the man was altered, and he soon died in a madhouse after having committed the most awful excesses.

And vanity cannot be avoided except by studiously cultivating that selflessness and poverty of heart advised as well by Jesus of Nazareth as by Buddha.

Another hindrance is fear. This is not, however, the worst of all, and is one that will disappear by means of knowledge, for fear is always the son of ignorance. Its effect on the ethereal form is to shrivel it up, or coagulate and contract it. But as knowledge increases, that contraction abates, permitting the person to expand. Fear is the same thing as frigidity on the earth, and always proceeds by the process of freezing.

In my next the subject will be further developed.

PART II

I is now over one year since I sent in Part I to the Editor of the *Path*. Since then I have heard that some students expressed a desire to read Part II, forgetting to observe, perhaps, that the first paper was complete in itself, and, if studied, with earnest practice to follow, would have led to beneficial results. It has not been necessary before to write No. II; and to the various students who so soon after reading the first have asked for the second, I plainly say that you have been led away because a sequel was indicated and you cannot have studied the first; furthermore I much doubt if you will be benefited by this any more than by the other.

Success in the culture of concentration is not for him who sporadically attempts it. It is a thing that flows from "a firm position assumed with regard to the end in view, and unremittingly kept up." Nineteenth Century students are too apt to think that success in occultism can be reached as one attains success in school or college, by reading and learning *printed words*. A complete knowledge of all that was ever written upon concentration will confer no power in the practice of that about which I treat. Mere book knowledge is derided in this school as much as it is by the clodhopper; not that I think book knowledge is to be avoided, but that sort of acquisition, without the concentration, is as useless as faith without works. It is

called in some places, I believe, "mere eye-knowledge." Such indeed it is; and such is the sort of culture most respected in these degenerate times.

In starting these papers the true practice was called Raj-Yoga. It discards those physical motions, postures, and recipes relating solely to the present personality, and directs the student to virtue and altruism as the basis from which to start. This is more often rejected than accepted. So much has been said during the last 1800 years about Rosicrucians, Egyptian Adepts, Secret Masters, Kaballah, and wonderful magical books, that students without a guide, attracted to these subjects, ask for information and seek in vain for the entrance to the temple of the learning they crave, because they say that virtue's rules are meant for babes and Sunday-schools, but not for them. And, in consequence, we find hundreds of books in all the languages of Europe dealing with rites, ceremonies, invocations, and other obscurities that will lead to nothing but loss of time and money. But few of these authors had anything save "mere eye-knowledge." 'Tis true they have sometimes a reputation, but it is only that accorded to an ignoramus by those who are more ignorant. The so-called great man, knowing how fatal to reputation it would be to tell how really small is his practical knowledge, prates about "projections and elementals," "philosopher's stone and elixir," but discreetly keeps from his readers the paucity of his acquirements and the insecurity of his own mental state. Let the seeker know, once for all, that the virtues cannot be discarded nor ignored; they must be made a part of our life, and their philosophical basis must be understood.

But it may be asked, if in the culture of concentration we shall succeed by the practice of virtue alone. The answer is No, not in this life, but perhaps one day in a later life. The life of virtue accumulates much merit; that merit will at some time cause one to be born in a wise family where the real practice of concentration may perchance begin; or it may cause one to be born in a family of devotees or those far advanced on the Path, as said in *Bhagavad-Gita*. But such a birth as this, says Krishna, is difficult to obtain; hence the virtues alone will not always lead in short space to our object.

We must make up our minds to a life of constant work upon this line. The lazy ones, or they who ask for pleasure, may as well give it up at the threshold and be content with the pleasant paths marked out for those who "fear God and honour the King." Immense fields of investigation and experiment have to be traversed; dangers unthought of and forces unknown are to be met; and all must be overcome, for in this battle *there is no quarter asked or given.* Great stores of knowledge must be found and *seized.* The kingdom of heaven is not to be had for the asking; it must *be taken by violence.* And the only way in which we can gain the will and the power to thus seize and hold, is by acquiring the virtues on the one hand, and minutely understanding ourselves on the other. Some day we shall begin to see why not one passing thought may be ignored, not one flitting impression missed. This we can perceive is no simple task. It is a gigantic work. Did you ever reflect that the mere passing sight of a picture, or a single word instantly lost in the rush of the world, may be basis for a dream that will poison the night and react upon the brain next day. Each one must be examined. If you have not noticed it, then when you awake next day you have to go back in memory over every word and circumstance of the preceding day, seeking, like the astronomer through space, for the lost one. And, similarly, without such a special reason, you must learn to be able to go thus backward into your days so as to go over carefully and in detail all that happened, all that you permitted to pass through the brain. Is this an easy matter?

But let us for a moment return to the sham adepts, the reputed Masters, whether they were well-intentioned or the reverse. Take Eliphas Levi who wrote so many good things, and whose books contain such masses of mysterious hints. Out of his own mouth he convicts himself. With great show he tells of the raising of the shade of Apollonius. Weeks beforehand all sorts of preparations had to be made, and on the momentous night absurd necromantic performances were gone through. What was the result? Why only that the so-called shade appeared for a few moments, and Levi says they never attempted it again. Any good medium of these days could call up the shade of Apollonius without preparation, and if Levi were an Adept he could have seen the dead quite as easily as he turned to his picture in a book. By these sporadic attempts and outside preparations, nothing is really gained but harm to those who thus indulge. And the

foolish dabbling by American theosophists with practices of the Yogis of India that are not one-eighth understood and which in themselves are inadequate, will lead to much worse results than the apochryphal attempt recorded by Eliphas Levi.

As we have to deal with the Western mind now ours, all unused as it is to these things and over-burdened with false training and falser logic, we must begin where we are, we must examine our present possessions and grow to know our own present powers and mental machinery. This done, we may proceed to see ourselves in the way that shall bring about the best result.

RAMATIRTHA.
(W. Q. JUDGE.)

The highest greatness and the highest wisdom are shown, the first by a noble submission to, the second by a thoughtful providence for, certain voluntarily admitted restraints.—RUSKIN.

Whoso cannot obey cannot be free, still less bear rule; he that is the inferior of nothing can be the superior of nothing, the equal of nothing.—CARLYLE.

REVIEWS

The Philosophy of the Upanishads, by S. Radhakrishnan, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London; price, 5*s*.

This lucidly written and clearly printed volume, which contains only 143 pages, may be confidently recommended as the best and most illuminating presentation of the Upanishads in English or any European tongue. The author is thoroughly familiar with the Upanishads in the original Sanskrit, and with the whole cycle of ancient Aryan literature; he has studied Jainism, Buddhism and the philosophical systems of India; he writes clearly and often eloquently; he possesses that spiritual insight which is the best heritage of Aryan India.

The book almost inevitably follows the lines which are inherent in the teaching of the Upanishads: The universal Being of the Eternal; the nature of the individual life manifested in each one of us; the underlying unity between the individual life and the Eternal; the steps by which this unity may be realized in spiritual experience. Perhaps the most valuable and original part of the book is the discussion of the reality or unreality of the manifested world, with the true meaning of the doctrine of Maya. The author makes clear exactly what reality and unreality mean in Aryan thought, and ably develops the idea of relative or conditional reality, as contrasted with sheer illusion. In the last analysis, only the Eternal is real; the visible universe, manifested within the Eternal, has no independent reality. But the universe is real for our experience; it is not a mirage, a phantom, an insubstantial pageant.

Perhaps the fairest way to convey the quality of a book is by quotation. Take, for example, this passage towards the end of the work under review:

"The theory of rebirth is quite as logical as any other hypothesis that is in the field, and is certainly more satisfactory than the theories of absolute annihilation or eternal retribution. It accounts for the apparent moral disorder and chaos of suffering. The unfair distribution of pain seems to contradict the rationality of the universe. As irregularities of the empirical world are a challenge to the logical faith, so moral disorder is a challenge to the belief in the goodness of the principle at work. If our faith is rational, there cannot be any intellectual or moral confusion. If moral chaos is ultimate, then moral paralysis would be the result. We have to reconcile the strangely chaotic appearances of the moral world with the faith in a good and great God. We should not be content with thinking that the world is organized in a haphazard manner. The hypothesis which traces the disorder and the suffering of the moral world to the freedom of man cannot account for the inequalities with which men are thrust into the world. These differences in the initial equipment contradict the idea of a divinely ordered universe. This hypothesis of rebirth gives us some explanation of the original difference. It makes us feel that the joy and suffering of the world are there for the progressive education of character."

A phrase towards the end of this passage, "the hypothesis of rebirth," suggests what is, perhaps, the one marked limitation of this excellent work. Many students of Theosophy believe that the teaching of rebirth is not a hypothesis; it is not the result of theorizing, it is the result of spiritual experience, of actual memory, as affirmed by Krishna and the Buddha. Throughout this work, many forms of knowledge are spoken of as the result of intellectual speculation, which students of Theosophy regard as being rather the fruit of spiritual experience.

C. J.

Mysterium Magnum or An Exposition of the First Book of Moses, called Genesis, by Jacob Boehme, in two volumes; published by John M. Watkins, price 50*s*.

These two large volumes are "published and dedicated by his widow to the late C. J. Barker, to whose self-denying generosity and industry this re-issue of the Works of Jacob Boehme is solely due."

There are many who find the writings of Boehme illuminating. To them we highly recommend these volumes. The translation, by John Sparrow, is a valiant and often successful effort to give Boehme's terminology a theosophic meaning. Chapter II, on the three different bodies of man—the "sidereal body" being "the highest excepting the divine in man"—may be found particularly suggestive. T.

Nineteenth Century Evolution And After, by the Reverend Marshall Dawson; The Macmillan Company, 1923; $1.50. This book is a survey in popular, graphic style of the difference between nineteenth century misinterpretations of evolution, and the more mature theories which the best scientific and religious thinkers are offering to-day. Evolution was seen at first only in terms of progress; now, retrogression and degeneration are recognized as equally prevalent and probable results of the evolutionary impulse. Optimistic belief in an inevitable progress saps to the very foundation the strength of just those principles of conduct which alone achieve advance. Religion, properly understood, is the truest ally of all those constructive forces which impel men to surpass whatever they may already have accomplished, and so to fit themselves to move on with nature's upward march, winning for themselves thereby that immortality in the spirit which would seem to be their next step.

A stimulating, provocative, forceful book, suggesting interesting collateral reading, and in line with much in the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. A. G.

Mumbo Jumbo, by Henry Clews, Junior; published by Boni and Liveright, New York. Price, $2.50.

We have heard wicked people say that they find much relief for their feelings when someone indulges in good, hard swearing over an annoyance shared in common. We have felt that way ourselves. The author of *Mumbo Jumbo* does not swear, but he has a vocabulary that leaves us speechless, and we envy him. Also he feels as we do about a great many things; that is to say he feels murderously, with a huge disgust which, one size larger, would result in silence, but which, as it is, must occasionally explode. Mr. Clews hates our machine-made civilization, with its graft, freak literature and art, commercialism and snobbery. More: it is a curious fact, he says, "that science, while giving us every conceivable kind of time-saving device, is robbing us of all our time for the real worth-while enjoyments of life, which, as the Divine Autocrat has decreed, are not only purely unscientific, but also entirely undemocratic. This would account, I imagine, for the fatuous, self-satisfied, aggressive and almost alarmingly vulgar expression of our democratized artists, philosophers and scientists, who, having lost their imagination, and consequently their capacity for true enjoyment, take infinite pains to complicate the simplest and most obvious facts of nature with highfalutin' phrases and mathematical symbols. And this abracadabra they then serve up to their brother bourgeois, whose egotism is always tickled by gibberosity, grandsillyquence and scientific mystification, believing this jargon to be expressive of 'progress'—a word with which his tongue is thickly coated, and of which he considers himself a divinely appointed guardian. What bourgeois would not choose to have himself transported by aeroplane, or wafted by a varnished three-legged department-store Ouija board into a heavenly kingdom of what he calls spiritualistic science, rather than be borne like a little child, on wings of faith, imagination and mystical adoration of nature, into the realms of God, where science, sex-equality and democracy enter not—thank God!"

One third of the book is given to an Introduction, one third to a description of "characters," and the remaining third to a "drama" in which the characters appear. One of the characters, Ezra P. Packer, is presented as the symbol of our epoch; and in case, from our previous quotation, it might be supposed that the author is anti-democratic in any limited sense, it is only fair to add extracts from his delineation of the said Ezra:

"He is Japan in pot-hat; China without pigtail, and 'Son of Heaven' set; England of Lloyd George, instead of St. George and King George, Emperor of India. . . .

"He is factory, kodak, phonograph, sewing-machine, cinema, Ford, tram, telephone, in the gentle, smiling isle of Queen Liliuokalani. . . .

"He is decadent monarch in 'golf outfit', 'tennis suitings', 'dress suit' and ingratiating kodak grin, cringing to decadent democracy.

"He is vulgarized, bankrupt, effete, jazzing European aristocracy, supported by jazzing, democratic daughters of High Finance and Synagogue."

Mr. Clews should be able to reach people whom we cannot reach. He talks the language of his own abominations,—we hope not habitually. His book has been excluded, we are informed, from the New York Public Library, though it is difficult to imagine why. To our taste, it is somewhat coarse in spots; but it is the last word in refinement if compared with practically all the classics, while scores of current novels, which the New York Public Library circulates without question, are intentionally salacious, and this is not only the opposite of Mr. Clews' spirit, but is as far as possible from his manner. In fifty years from now, *Mumbo Jumbo* is likely to be regarded as one of the great satires.

Yet, to tell the truth, the book suffers from being an act of pure self-indulgence. Its author too evidently revelled in its pyrotechnics. He belongs to the generation he condemns, and while this is the secret of his effectiveness, we believe it too big a price to pay for the ear of "Bessie", Clare Sheridan, *The New Republic*, *The Smart Set*, Bernard Shaw, and the rest of his horrors, all of whose ears combined are not worth the sacrifice of ***restraint.*** To fling that away, is to fling away art, and to lower oneself to the seventh circle of the Inferno, where those live who do violence to their own souls.

We sympathize so keenly with the author's purpose, and admire his gifts so unreservedly, that we feel as if we had a right to expect a less muddied expression of Theosophy from his pen. This is our excuse for venturing to criticize so frankly his present work.

H.

Ignatius Loyola, An Attempt at an Impartial Biography, by Henry Dwight Sedgwick; The Macmillan Company, 1923; price, $3.00.

The writings and accomplishments of Ignatius of Loyola prove him to have been a man of unusual spiritual stature, if he was not actually one of those volunteers from the lower degrees of the Lodge, who assume the mental and other limitations of a particular time and country, in order to introduce by that means, the leaven of the Lodge into a decadent and unspiritual age. Much has been written about him, and the religious society he founded; but there has been so great prejudice, either for or against him and his work, that little of this literature can appeal to the student of Theosophy. The present book, therefore, will be welcome to members of The Theosophical Society, because the author, a man of letters and with the breadth of spirit which is born of a true culture, has written an impartial biography based on a thorough examination of original documents. Not the least valuable portion of the book is its translations from Latin or Spanish letters and documents which would be inaccessible to many English readers.

Mr. Sedgwick is neither a mystic nor an occultist. He, therefore, does not pretend to judge, or even to appreciate, the mysticism of Ignatius; but, reserving his own judgments in many cases, recounts faithfully what Ignatius himself, or his early companions and biographers, tell of inner experience. This unusual detachment enables each reader to form his own estimate, and certainly leads the way for many a "Protestant," who has inherited prejudices against everything suggesting the "jesuitical." It is of the essence of the theosophic method to penetrate prejudice and preconception, wherever found; and the life and writings of Ignatius can be studied to advantage as an exercise in this cardinal theosophic virtue. To the reviewer, this interesting volume has brought the conviction that genius and greatness of soul—clothed in whatever forms—reveal the same fundamental truths about life. Ignatius' teaching about obedience, for example, may be set beside that of Marshal Foch,—the spirit and essence are the same. The laws of life, the laws that govern the growth and upbuilding of the spiritual man, the secret of touching the hearts and lives of other men, the mysterious wonder and beauty of a

Master's love for his disciples—these are the things which Ignatius himself learned (or grew into), and these are the things which his biography and writings tell of. They are subjects of perennial interest; and many students of Theosophy will thank Mr. Sedgwick for his unconscious labours in their behalf. A. G.

The following recent articles in the French periodicals seem especially worthy of notice:

Revue des Deux Mondes. M. Louis de Launay, of the *Academie des Sciences*, has contributed four delightful articles on the family and life of the great physicist, André-Marie Ampère (*Les Trois Ampère*, April 1–June 1). Science as well as the Church has its saints, and Ampère ranks high in the scientific hierarchy, not only for his discoveries, but for the humility, self-denial and humanity of his spirit. Like other saints, he had manifest imperfections, of which he was acutely conscious, though they could never dim the flame of his devotion to truth. Perhaps his gravest failing, which he shared with Sir Isaac Newton, was absent-mindedness. M. de Launay contrasts the abstraction of the scientific genius with the vanity and self-concern of so many artists, even the greatest. The artist and the scientist supplement each other, as well in their most typical weaknesses as in their strength. M. de Launay further suggests that the real value of the work of a *savant* depends in no small degree upon the quality of his personality, and upon the motives which guide him. "It is not a matter of indifference for the future of mankind, that a scientific discovery should be made and developed at a particular time and in a particular milieu." . . . In *L'An Prochain à Jerusalem*, now published in book form, the Tharaud brothers have continued their study of the Hebrew mind, so fortunate in its gifts, so unfortunate sometimes in its bias (April 15–May 15). There seems to be a vast gulf between the Galician Jew, steeped in the lore of the Talmud, and the international banker of London or New York; but both alike share the intuitive power and quick intelligence of their race, while revealing in equal measure the tendency to seek a gross material encasement for their thought. The noble Messianic ideal has never quite left them, but so often they have seen it only as reflected in images of the most worldly purposes and desires. The Tharaud brothers illustrate this tragic antithesis in many of their works, in none more poignantly than the present, which tells the story of the modern Jewish colonization of Palestine.

Mercure de France. In *La Crise de la Culture intellectuelle en Allemagne*, Madame Régina Zabloudovsky discusses the latest German craze for "occultism" and "Oriental religions" (July 15). There has been a flood of books upon these and kindred subjects, though evidently the supply is not yet equal to the demand. We read without enthusiasm of works in preparation upon Buddhism, Taoism and the Vedanta. There is no evidence that the Germans are seeking truth in the Eastern scriptures or anywhere else. The passing of the old order and of its attendant psychic exaltation has left them with a sense of pain, but without the resolve to read the cause of their suffering and to find its corrective. They ask for an anodyne, not a cure. Therefore, they have turned to the Eastern doctrine of *Maya* with motives analogous to those which actuate the drug fiend. Having failed to bully the Universe into submission, they now pretend that the Universe is only a dream. They have to learn that, though in the ordinary dream a man may seem to sin with impunity, in the Dream of the Universe he cannot escape the least of the consequences of his acts.

S. V.

Books reviewed in these columns may be obtained from The Quarterly Book Department, P. O. Box 64, Station O., New York, N. Y.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 299.—*Is the dread of death the fear of losing personality?*

ANSWER.—It may well be, in part. There must be many reasons, good and bad, for fearing death. Every part of our seven-fold being has its own consciousness, and may have its own reasons for fear. We feel each one of these fears as "ours" to the extent to which we identify ourselves with the part from which they spring, and are conscious of the reason for it or only of a vague instinctive dread according to the clearness of our consciousness in that part of ourselves. The body, from whose desires and fears our detachment is still, shall we say, imperfect, has its fear—very well founded, for it faces annihilation. So does the personality, lower manas and the great body of our every-day desires. Anyone who has ever tried to kill out a lower desire knows that it does not submit tamely, or face the process of annihilation without making us feel, for a time at least, that it is we ourselves who are being "sacrificed."

But good as may be the reasons of our lower natures for fearing death, it may well be that the higher has even better cause. We did not come into incarnation to amuse ourselves, but for a purpose. Have we fulfilled it? Perhaps it was to conquer a specific weakness, and, maybe, we were given by Karma ideal conditions for the task. Has it been accomplished? Perhaps, as was suggested in a recent QUARTERLY, there are some who adore their Master and yet in their last life may have been led by their weaknesses into betraying him and his cause. They may have begged for one more chance and, by his magnanimity, been given—one more. That chance, perhaps the last, may be nearly gone, and not yet taken. With death, the gates close.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—Is it not rather the fear of the results of the personality upon the enduring individuality? We are conscious throughout life in our real selves of the faults and weaknesses and sins of the personality, we recognize the extent to which they have held back the growth of the individuality that endures and goes on. In our real selves we do not dread death itself, for we know it for what it is. But while we know that each effort counts which we have made with the personal nature, we know, too, the many efforts which we should have made, might have made, and did not make, and we know the Law.

No, it is not dread of death so much as it is dread of the consequences of our failures, sorrow at the thought of the limit to that inner renewing and vision, which goes on after death, which we ourselves have imposed by our own acts or failures to act.

A.

ANSWER.—Hamlet made some famous remarks upon this very question. His fear was of the unknown, of the darkness beyond the tomb. His experience must be that of many, perhaps of the vast majority of mankind. "To die, to sleep; to sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub; for in that sleep of death what dreams may come?"

The fear of annihilation may often be the prime factor in the dread of death. Yet, the wise man cannot fear annihilation, but will rejoice in it. For what is annihilated? Surely not the spirit of man, for that is co-eternal with the spirit of the universe. It is not even the personality which need perish, but only those factors in personal life which cannot be assimilated by the immortal spirit. Is it not a blessing that the law of life and death will enable us to get rid of these finally and completely? As has been well said, "Nothing is meaner than the desire to live on for ever in any shape."

A. X.

QUESTION NO. 300.—*In the Bhagavad Gita insistence is placed upon detachment from works and the sacrifice of works. Would not complete detachment take away the merit of sacrifice? If one views pleasure and pain, riches and poverty, success and failure with equal mind and claims no right to the fruit of one's work, can there be any sacrifice in the offering up of these things?*

ANSWER.—Let us use, instead of detachment, some other phrase, like disinterestedness, freedom from self-seeking, purity of motive, which mean the same; and ask the question: Does purity of motive take away the merit of sacrifice? It is worth while also to ask in what sense we are using merit: are we thinking of the nobility of the sacrifice, or of a possible reward to him that makes it? As to the last question, may not the sacrifice consist in working for that high spirit, in which these things are regarded with equal mind? It is worth while to try the experiment. J.

ANSWER.—In exoteric Christianity sacrifice is seldom conceived apart from moral suffering. But it is well to remember that the root-meaning of the word sacrifice (*sacer*, sacred, and *facere*, to make) makes it synonymous with consecration. To sacrifice one's works is to consecrate them, by performing them consciously and deliberately as an expression of the Divine Self. So long as we have lower natures, they will suffer in every sacrifice; but we may look forward hopefully to a day when our lower natures will have ceased to be. Surely it can never be necessary to keep a false personality for ever, merely for the purpose of suffering through it. A Master is perfected in sacrifice, because his detachment from the reactions, pleasurable or otherwise, of his manifested nature is complete. With his consciousness fixed in the Eternal, he does not say to himself: "Is it not wonderful, that, in spite of my suffering, I am still making this sacrifice?" He suffers in compassion for the stricken souls of others, but let us not confuse the suffering of a spirit labouring for humanity with the pain of a nature divided against itself or with the self-pity of a personality under sentence of death. S. L.

ANSWER.—But one does not often get to the point of viewing these things with equal mind, of claiming no part or right in results, without having, perhaps in some cases for years, made distinct and great sacrifices. It is the sacrifice of self, permanent and consummated, it is the conquering of self, the replacing of self, through the deliberate effort made through sacrifice after sacrifice, with something far greater than self, that brings the new view point, the new motive. *Then*, it is not sacrifice any more, one *wants* to give everything. But complete detachment, when finally arrived at, will have been through sacrifice, and the merit of that sacrifice will not have been taken away, for in a sense detachment itself must be the reward of that merit.
C. R. A.

ANSWER.—Is it not a matter of the Right Performance of Action? The *Gita* teaches this especially, and that the Right Action is that performed with heart and mind concentrated on Krishna. Surely there is no merit in sacrifice for its own sake. But devotion to the Master leads to the performance of action for the Master's service. The man so devoted is detached from the concerns of the personal self, and it is from the standpoint of the personal self that certain actions bear the appearance of sacrifice. Then, again, the question centres upon the acquisition of merit. If action be performed for this object, there is no sacrifice. Is not the instruction in the *Gita* directed towards the performance of action through devotion? Meanwhile discernment between right and wrong kinds of action will lead to many opportunities of sacrifice. A. K.

ANSWER.—Let us try to re-phrase the question, thus: Can there be any merit in the sacrifice of a Master? The answer is, yes. For further information, see the notes to *The Voice of the Silence*, which explain the difference between a Pratyeka Buddha and a Nirmanakaya. This is a question, however, which does not appear vital to those of us who are struggling up the path of discipleship, and who realize that to understand detachment, we must become detached, to understand sacrifice, we must sacrifice, and that all seeming contradictions vanish, as Krishna said, when approached with the sword of experience—the only real knowledge.
X. O.

QUESTION NO. 301.—*We are told that there is no reality in materiality; if that is so, why is the personal, physical man with his appetites, so difficult of control by the higher, spiritual nature?*

ANSWER.—Matter is force embodied in form. Force is the action of consciousness, and form is the limitation of consciousness, which, however, is always absolutely free to act or not to act, to limit or not to limit itself, for consciousness is the only independent reality in the Universe and nothing exists outside it to move or to constrain it. Matter has no independent reality, but it has a relative reality, reflecting the limitations which we impose upon our actions. But withdraw the force from any form and that particular material manifestation will vanish like smoke. It is difficult to do this, because we have wrongly identified ourselves with the form which we would destroy. Yet we are assured that, if we keep trying, it can be done. S. L.

ANSWER.—Who was the rash man who made the statement quoted? Surely not a student of Theosophy, who would realize only too well the "reality" of matter *on its own plane.* The sun is more "real" than the fog it dissipates, but the fog, while it lasts, may be a very real obstacle to navigation. It is not, however, by any means necessary that a thing should be real for it to be difficult for the higher nature to control. Maya, the great power of illusion, is terribly potent. Probably the most unreal thing in the world is our idea of ourselves, our vanity; yet few things have more influence over us or are harder for us to master. J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—It all depends on where the attention is centred. The discoveries of the last twenty-five years have exploded the reality of matter as such, and shown that what we call "matter" is a mode of operation of force and that one substance differs from another according to the vibrations of force operating within it. The difficulty of demonstrating the operations of these forces may serve to illustrate the difficulty for the higher spiritual nature to manifest in the personal physical man. But just as the one can be done, so can the other by the appropriate means and operations. Let the student on these lines read the "Elixir of Life" from *Five Years of Theosophy*, and some of these points will be made clear. Just as the operations of physical science have to be patiently and perseveringly worked for by close application and experiment, so the difficulty of control can be conquered by right attention and by bringing about the right conditions. The centre of life and consciousness has to be shifted from the denser and more impure states of matter, from the personal, physical man, to the higher, spiritual nature; and it is found that one cannot "serve God *and* Mammon."

A. K.

MEETINGS

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society are held on alternate Saturday evenings, at 64 Washington Mews, between Washington Square and East 8th Street. The meetings begin at half past eight, and close at ten o'clock. Meetings will be held on January 3rd, 17th and 31st; February 14th and 28th; March 14th and 28th; April 11th and 25th (Convention Meeting).

Visitors are welcome at these meetings.

Juan José Benzo

The Theosophical Society has lost an old and valued member through the death of Juan José Benzo, of Caracas, Venezuela. An eloquent tribute paid to him by one of his fellow-members in Venezuela, reveals the spirit he inspired in others, and thus conveys a sense of his own spirit as no words of ours could do. Speaking of him as "that best of comrades and Herculean worker in the cause of Theosophy," who saved the movement in Venezuela "in the black hour of the Chicago Convention in 1898," the writer continues (translated from the Spanish):

"Benzo was the classical type of theosophist who, once affiliated, finds that the Society is his home and that he has been born in a family whose name he has to bear inevitably, and to whose mind it would never occur that he should not be so called. To think of Benzo as not being a Theosophist would be the same as to think of water that was not wet or of fire without heat. Such was his consubstantiality.

"He died heroically. He understood, suffered, was silent, and sacrificed himself. He left behind him a star which gives light in the midst of us, and a fulness in our hearts which makes it impossible to believe that he has died. As was his character, thus we follow it mourning. The interment was an unusual note. It seemed as if we were entertaining an Amphitryon on his name day. All were content and filled with happy auguries for the future of our Movement. We had sent an emissary to the other side of Life to which we had now more ready access and right of entry. A remembrance of him who so greatly loved the Cause and all his comrades."

Ave, victor triumphans!

He was and is, of "the Corps"—a cadet in the army of Heaven—and we ask the members in Venezuela to share these well-known lines with us, as we, on behalf of the Society, stand to salute him:

"The Corps! The Corps! The Corps!
The Corps! bare-headed, salute it,
With eyes up, thanking our God—
That we of the Corps are treading
Where they of the Corps have trod.
They are here in ghostly assemblage,
The men of the Corps long dead,
And our hearts are standing attention
While we wait for their passing tread.

"We sons of to-day, we salute you,
You, sons of an earlier day.
We follow, close order, behind you,
Where you have pointed the way;
The long gray line of us stretches
Thro' the years of a century told.
And the last man feels to his marrow
The grip of your far off hold.

"Grip hands with us now though we see not,
Grip hands with us, strengthen our hearts—
As the long line stiffens and straightens
With the thrill that your presence imparts.
Grip hands, tho' it be from the shadows
While we swear, as you did of yore,
Or living, or dying to honour
The Corps, and the Corps, and the Corps."

The Society has also lost an old and most faithful member through the death of

Mrs. Carrie G. Gilson

of Oakland, California, an example of the power of a beautiful spirit and a devoted life. Though burdened by constant illness, she made herself a centre of strength to the Movement by the ardour of her thought and aspiration.

The Knickerbocker Press, New Rochelle, N. Y.

STANDARD BOOKS

Blavatsky, H. P. Isis Unveiled, Vols. I and II	cloth,	$10.00
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The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the

Secretary T. S., P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.